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THESIS

GOLD, NOT PURPLE: LESSONS FROM USAID-USMILGP COOPERATION IN EL SALVADOR, 1980-1992

by

Scott W. Moore

December, 1997

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The United States faces a continuing need to conduct interagency operations, especially between the military and USAID. Surprisingly, however, this field has been treated much too casually in light of its merits as a potential force multiplier—and as a source of serious operational problems. US leaders will continue to choose the interagency approach (over unilateral options) to solve the sorts of complex problems that demand action and systematic intervention, yet allow room for political maneuver. By studying the activities of two inherently adversarial bureaucracies (USAID and the USMILGP) which needed to work together to solve a complex counterinsurgency problem in El Salvador, I have been able to determine which factors are most important for unity of effort in future interagency operations. In El Salvador the mission was to combat insurgents, but the principles and many of the tasks required to succeed then and there, apply today and elsewhere in waging the wars against drugs, terror, and other post-Cold War security threats.

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GOLD, NOT PURPLE: LESSONS FROM USAID-USMILGP COOPERATION IN EL SALVADOR, 1980-1992

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The United States faces a continuing need to conduct interagency operations, especially between the military and USAID. Surprisingly, however, this field has been treated much too casually in light of its merits as a potential force multiplier—and as a source of serious operational problems. US leaders will continue to choose the interagency approach (over unilateral options) to solve the sorts of complex problems that demand action and systematic intervention, yet allow room for political maneuver. By studying the activities of two inherently adversarial bureaucracies (USAID and the USMILGP) which needed to work together to solve a complex counterinsurgency problem in El Salvador, I have been able to determine which factors are most important for unity of effort in future interagency operations. In El Salvador the mission was to combat insurgents, but the principles and requirements of interagency cooperation apply today for combating terrorism, narcotics trafficking, insurgencies, and other post-Cold War security threats.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States faces a continuing need to conduct interagency operations, especially between the military and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). I argue that "purple" is easy compared to the interagency "gold" approach. To date, this field has been treated much too casually in light of its merits as a potential force multiplier, and as a source of serious operational problems. Existing literature conveys the need for viable interagency organizations and processes, but falls short of supplying the requisite details about how to provide for coordinated, mutually supportive, and unified cross-agency operations. Using the 1980-1992 counterinsurgency effort in El Salvador as a case study, my analysis helps fill this gap by examining the key factors and mechanisms that determined the course and outcome of the war.

My study of this interagency campaign is based on original research of the interaction between the United States Military Group (USMILGP) and USAID. When the interagency campaign got underway in El Salvador, chances appeared slim that such divergent agencies would be able to work together as a team. Counterinsurgency theory called for a concerted multi-agency effort against the guerrillas; organization theory said the odds were against interagency cooperation taking place; and civil-military biases erected even more cultural and philosophical barriers. Yet, despite overwhelming odds, a very complex problem, and a disjointed US bureaucratic mechanism, unity of effort notably improved in the latter stages of the war. What were the reasons interagency coordination improved between the USMILGP and USAID, and can they be generalized

and applied here and now to various other interagency operations—and other dissimilar agencies?

After examining the extent of interaction and coordination between these two influential agencies during the war, I argue that Salvadoran operations were initially impeded by interagency disunity of effort but over time, working relationships developed among the small numbers of self-motivated, "special" and dedicated people and in turn, coordination improved. The reasons these dissimilar agencies achieved their goals was ultimately a function of the senior leadership, trust, shared experiences, and the nature of the conflict itself.

At the start, the Salvadoran conflict presented itself as a kind of learning-laboratory for low-intensity conflict—a chance to practice counterinsurgency doctrine. Preventing the spread of communism called for the artful blending of all the instruments of US and Salvadoran power, cooperation between various inherently adversarial bureaucracies, and synergistic civil-military relationships.

In El Salvador the mission was to combat insurgents, but the principles and many of the tasks required to succeed then and there, apply today and elsewhere in waging the wars against drugs, terrorism, and other post-Cold War security threats. The required counter-mechanism for these problems has been termed the interagency process.

The Salvadoran case study supports the argument that senior leadership intervention is a prerequisite for achieving interagency unity of effort. Another part of my argument addresses the prerequisites for improved interagency coordination—a requirement for unity of effort. It states that trust, stakes, and shared experiences are the most important determinants of interagency process improvements. Of the three

variables, I found, trust and shared experiences did contribute to good coordination, but higher or lower stakes did not seem to correlate with better or worse coordination. Recognizing the resource constraints on people, equipment, and money, I then tried to correlate the variables of constrained resources and the irregular nature of the conflict with improvements in interagency support. Surprisingly, I found that resource constraints did not seem to significantly affect interagency coordination or unity of effort. On the other hand, the nature of the conflict, as it changed from a military war of attrition to a broader competition for "hearts and minds," demanded mutual interagency support and forced the two agencies to work together better.

In conclusion, four of the six independent variables I tested significantly affected the degree to which interagency unity of effort occurred: senior leadership involvement, trust, shared experiences, and the nature of the conflict. The remaining two independent variables make sense intuitively, but further analysis shows weak causal links. Higher stakes did not noticeably affect interagency coordination, and lower resource constraints did not influence mutual interagency support.

In light of the inevitability of future interagency operations, I derived four recommendations from my research: 1) Conduct interagency exercises, 2) Invest in the people who will do them, 2) Educate the leaders, and 4) Develop interagency organizations.

Finally, the empowerment of interagency entities—the "crabgrass" of bureaucracy—is essential for implementing national solutions to complicated problems. Without institutionalizing interagency emphasis, too much unity of effort will be sacrificed until the workarounds get in place. Organizations need to change to support

interagency operations that, in many cases, are extremely time-critical: counter-terrorism (CT) responses, for example. Today CT responses are the result of a convoluted ad hoc process in which success relies upon innate human reactions, given their appreciation of the urgency of terrorist crises, to squelch interagency squabbles, and get the job done fast. Ad hoc processes. . . is that what we really want, or rather what we have settled for instead of making hard decisions and real changes?

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

This thesis explores the increasingly vital—though extraordinarily difficult—realm of interagency operations. To date, this field has been treated much too casually in light of its merits as a potential force multiplier and as a source of serious operational problems. Existing literature conveys the need for viable interagency organizations and processes, but falls short of supplying the requisite details about how to provide for coordinated, mutually supportive, and unified cross-agency operations. Using the 1980-1992 counterinsurgency effort in El Salvador as a case study, my analysis will help fill this gap by examining the key factors and mechanisms that determined the course and outcome of the war.

My study of this interagency campaign is based on original research of the interaction between the United States Military Group (USMILGP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). When the interagency campaign got underway in El Salvador, chances appeared slim that such divergent agencies would be able to work together as a team. Counterinsurgency theory called for a concerted multi-agency effort against the guerrillas; organization theory said the odds were against interagency cooperation taking place; and civil-military biases erected even more cultural and philosophical barriers. Yet, despite overwhelming odds, a very complex problem and a disjointed US bureaucratic mechanism, unity of effort notably improved in the latter stages of the war. What were the reasons interagency coordination improved between the USMILGP and USAID, and can they be generalized and applied here and now to various other interagency operations—and other dissimilar agencies?

After examining the extent of interaction and coordination between these two influential agencies during the war, I argue that Salvadoran operations were initially impeded by interagency disunity of effort but over time, working relationships developed among the small numbers of self-motivated, "special," and dedicated people and in turn, coordination improved. The reasons these dissimilar agencies achieved their goals was ultimately a function of the senior leadership, trust, shared experiences, and the nature of the conflict itself.

In 1980, the problem faced by US strategists charged with "drawing the line against communist aggression"[1] in El Salvador was a familiar one—but by no means simple. Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) insurgents (12,000 Salvadoran Marxist rebels with alliances in Cuba, Vietnam, and Nicaragua[2]) garnered support from a variety of popular rebellious groups with some legitimate grievances. They constituted a credible threat for the 17,000 poorly trained and equipped Salvadoran soldiers. Most Salvadorans mistrusted the regime (civilian and military officials) because they represented an unaccountable, sinister military institution; the omnipotence of oligarchic domination; and repeated violations of democratic processes. President Ronald Reagan sent a limited number of US soldiers, primarily Army Special Forces (SF); humanitarian workers; and diplomats to El Salvador to help squelch the rebellion. The ad hoc team quickly discovered how fractured Salvadoran society really was as they

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[1] Secretary of State Alexander Haig first used the phrase "drawing the line" in reference to the mission in El Salvador while briefing congressional leaders on the State Department's White Paper, *Communist Interference in El Salvador*. See William M. LeoGrande, "A Splendid Little War: Drawing the Line in El Salvador," *Revolution in Central America,* ed. (Colorado: Westview Press,1981), 27.

[2] Benjamin C. Schwarz, *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador: The Frustrations of Reform and the Illusions of Nation Building*, (Santa Monica, California: National Defense Research Institute, 1991), 8.

applied counterinsurgency doctrine, an interagency undertaking under the rubric of Foreign Internal Defense (FID),[3] to El Salvador's complicated and brutal civil war.[4]

For a time, the US/Salvadoran interagency counter-guerrilla responses were plagued by disharmony—why? One explanation addresses the problem of different personalities and cultures. Retired SF officer, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Watson argues that "interagency coordination was very much personality-driven insofar as there was that natural chasm between people that saw themselves as sort of . . . action-guy, casual hero (Salvadoran description of US Special Forces) and the AID development guys who deliver the goods and really are concerned with the infrastructure and making programs work."[5] Another explanation alludes to the existence, or lack of, direct senior leader intervention and emphasis. Tom Hawk, the Director of USAID's Special Assistance (DIRSA) program, felt that "the only reason (his program) had any clout was (because of the support they received from) the Ambassador. We had the support of AID . . . but colleagues at the time saw us as CIA or counterinsurgency . . . we had a lot of criticisms

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[3] Joint Publication 3-07.1 defines FID as: "Participation by the civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the active programs taken by another government to protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency." This broad definition frames a messy foreign assistance arena that is a veritable minefield for those responsible for its effective conduct.

[4] Schwarz notes that American strategists considered the civil war in El Salvador to be the "ideal testing ground" in which to demonstrate counterinsurgency doctrine. A.J. Bacevich, et al, *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1988), 2. Bacevich expands on the full range of actions relevant to counterinsurgency. He calls this "military policy," and by that, means the political, social, economic, psychological, and diplomatic efforts which are used to defeat the insurgent.

[5] Author's 16 June 1997 telephone interview with Special Forces Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Bob Watson, 1st Brigade OPATT, May 1986-July 1987. He characterized the two types as: "The Special Forces guys were more reckless and more concerned with going where the action was—wherever the action might be. The AID guys were more programmatic knowing that this was their program and this was what they needed to get done because they were going to be audited in a little different way. It's a cultural thing—a bureaucratic cultural thing. But in point of fact, I guess you get to the point where men and women of good will . . . on mission to work together, can certainly do so."

internally. Some of that prejudice existed—and still exists."[6] Although eventually "both organizations became known to each other, " as ex-MILGP Commander Major General John C. Ellerson observed, interagency coordination "as it applied to the FID piece, was not initially . . . well developed. That was not because of a conscious decision on anybody's part not to (cooperate), but I think it was a function of the fact that we were both decisively engaged with what we perceived to be our own areas of interest."[7]

Counterinsurgency principles demand interagency cooperation in each of the domains of national power in order to win "hearts and minds";[8] organization theory explains why cooperation is really hard to get; and civil-military relations literature says you had better cube the degree of difficulty when such disparate cultures need to hold hands. To take civil-military prejudices to an extreme—the military is viewed as an organization which wholesale kills people and breaks things to achieve its ends; and civilians as the sort who think conducting negotiations and throwing more money at a problem will keep it off American doorsteps. In fact, interagency operations that are

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[6] Author's 30 May 1997 telephone interview with Tom Hawk who was the Director of DIRSA, the controversial—but highly successful by any standards—department of the USAID effort in El Salvador which succeeded in cutting through the red tape and gave money directly to the mayors. Tom Hawk started working for USAID in El Salvador in July 1986, charged with the task of coordinating activities in the conflict areas. Currently he is the Team Leader of the local government project in El Salvador. When Special Forces officers remember the best—and most cooperative—parts of the AID effort in El Salvador, they cite the activities of Tom Hawk and Debbie Kennedy (Project Development Officer, 1986-1991) and the *Municipios en Acción* (MEA) program.

[7] Author's 30 May 1997 telephone interview with Major General (retired) John C. Ellerson, MILGP Commander from 1986-1988. General Ellerson also pointed out that coordination was especially good for a time, he felt, due to the rallying effect following the 1986 earthquake in San Salvador which killed thousands and literally shook up the "business as usual" mentality.

[8] The telling expression "hearts and minds" was coined in Malaya in 1952 by the British High Commissioner, General (later Field Marshal) Sir Gerald Templer. His inspiration was the old Chinese saying, "Gain the people's heart and also eradicate the fear of Government found in people's minds and hearts." Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency 1948-1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1.

time-sensitive, require deliberate planning and execution, and involve the use of deadly force, are usually performed best by the military. Few civilian organizations have the resources or efficiencies offered by the military. Military operations require accountable and engaged leadership, established procedures and chains of command, and heavy emphasis on training and performance standards. People think that the military views the world as black or white, while civilians argue about varying shades of gray. Civilian operations are less rigid in their styles of leadership, regard for inter-changeability, and command and control requirements. Civil authorities often tolerate more individuality, disunity, and inefficiencies; all characteristics of a functioning democracy. In a democracy, civilians necessarily run the show. However, considering the need for postwar reconciliation, democratic palatability, widespread appeal, and overall effectiveness; neither the military, nor civilian agencies can succeed without the other. Moreover, the equation is further complicated in coalition efforts where forces from each country act in accordance with their own versions of appropriate civil-military relations. The Salvadoran dilemma called for a cooperative process and multi-agency response that defied the principles of organizational behavior and customary civil-military relations.

The problem with interagency initiatives is that there is little incentive for dissimilar agencies to support each other, especially if cooperation endangers their organization's status, goals, or other fundamental interests. Organizations are foremost concerned with their own survival. In interagency operations, turf delineation becomes less certain and inefficiencies abound as bureaucracies under siege tend to rely on standard operating procedures, often to the detriment of the larger US effort. The

problem is compounded when organizations attack the problem from distant perspectives and cultures; one civilian, the other military. Success in El Salvador, to a large extent, depended on the ability of distinctly separate agencies and their leaders to blend and engage all elements of national power effectively. In this era of fiscal constraints there is pressure to do more with less and synchronize resources for maximum impact. Scholars George Raach and Ilana Kass emphasize the need for interagency improvements: "If the United States is to enjoy a measure of order and stability in the conduct of world affairs, this synergism must be routine, must occur across the spectrum of relations, and must be applied with vision and conviction."[9] Lessons can be drawn from the synergism achieved by the USMILGP and USAID in El Salvador—two agencies which frequently find themselves working side-by-side in a variety of situations worldwide.

B. CASE STUDY

In considering the period of concerted US intervention in the Salvadoran conflict (1980-1992) three stages emerge which emphasize different methods and degrees of interagency cooperation. For my purposes, interagency cooperation exists when two or more agencies work together in the pursuit of a common purpose. The first stage is up to the time of the beginning of The National Campaign Plan (NCP) in 1983; the second stage includes a four-year period ending roughly in 1987; and the third stage continues until the 1992 signing of the peace accords. There is an ongoing fourth stage which deals with the consequences of rebuilding Salvadoran society in the post-war

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[9] George T. Raach and Ilana Kass, "National Power and the Interagency Process," *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Summer 1995), 9.

environment. While this stage is not explicitly examined herein, I contend that the bottom-up interagency initiatives and overall conduct of various participants inevitably influenced the Salvadoran institutions, mindset, and personalities that US agencies encounter today in their dealings.

Today, interagency teams are upstaging joint teams as the preferred method for solving crises. Using El Salvador as a benchmark, the interagency approach may be useful for a variety of other applications to include counter-drug, counter-terror, democratization, counter-proliferation, and nation-building missions. Interagency operations can be better described as "collective" operations. As "purple" signifies joint today, perhaps "gold" will proclaim the paradigm for tomorrow's collective operations. Besides El Salvador, interagency coordination was crucial to recent US operations in Panama, Haiti, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia. In a variety of operations where the stakes are high, the US can ill-afford to conduct multi-agency operations in an ad-hoc manner. Is this meant to be an interagency wake-up call for military agencies? Yes—and it is not the first.[10] Frustrated by the disunity of US operations in Vietnam, President Lyndon B. Johnson directed the formation of an empowered civil-military organization called the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS).[11] Johnson wanted an interagency organization that enabled "a better

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[10] In the early 1960s, US policy makers complained about the problem of different American agencies presenting conflicting advice to South Vietnamese officials at various administrative levels. There was no individual, committee, or task force below the presidential level in charge of the war or pacification. In 1965, Henry Kissinger "reported that there was little integration of the various American programs, that AID management lines in the field were hopelessly tangled, and that the entire management structure needed to be overhauled." Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1982), 17.

[11] "The organization's title, Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support—CORDS—combined the names of two separate staffs then providing support for pacification: a civilian Office of Civil Operations and a military Revolutionary Development Support Directorate." Scoville, v.

military program, a better pacification program that includes everything, and a better peace program."[12] More and more, "Hippies" and "Snake-eaters" will find themselves working together in multi-agency efforts in the common pursuit of US national objectives. In 1995 Raach and Kass argued: "The interagency process will continue whether the military plays (leads) or not, however . . . ultimately the Armed Forces must deal with the flawed results."[13] Hence, the prudent military agency will carry the interagency torch. The Salvadoran dilemma constitutes a recent interagency enterprise that merits scrutiny with an eye towards institutionalizing those interagency imperatives which are bound to improve contemporary interagency operations.

The existing interagency literature, though scant, warns us of the complexities inherent in interagency operations, but fails to focus on the specific means for getting the most out of interagency operations. Admiral Paul David Miller, a strong advocate for the interagency process,[14] calls for more work to be done in the pursuit of better interagency operations: "To face the challenges of today and tomorrow, the interagency process must find ways of identifying and engaging the full range of core competencies available from organizations perhaps not traditionally viewed as participants—including both the private sector and the armed forces."[15] He calls for improved operating mechanisms and warns of the "reluctance to address the hard issues . . . lack of common procedures among participating agencies . . . and no real focus on the root cause of the

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[12] Ibid, 23.
[13] Raach and Kass, 11.
[14] The former Commander-in-Chief Admiral Paul David Miller first described the *interagency process* in his 1993 book by the same name. Afterwards, there was a flurry of articles about interagency operations, but nothing substantive until Joint Pub 3-08, Volumes I and II, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* came out in Oct 1996.

problem(s) that (could become) the prescription for catastrophic failure (of US policy)."[16] Defense analysts William Mendel and David Bradford predict that: "Agencies will continue to be prone to talking past each other as they plan and program according to different priorities, schedules, and operating areas."[17]

C. METHODOLOGY

Finding the interagency literature underdeveloped for my research, I turned to the writings on counterinsurgency doctrine, organizational theory, and civil-military relations as the basis for making my argument. I wanted to determine which factors are most apt to lead to interagency process improvements, thereby becoming critical prerequisites for success in such operations. I derived six independent variables from these three well-developed fields of literature (substantiated by a consensus of various participants of the Salvadoran conflict) which seemed to be particularly important in determining unity of effort in interagency operations, which is my dependent variable. These are: senior leadership, trust, stakes, shared experiences, resource constraints, and the nature of the conflict. The results of my analysis are detailed in Chapter IV.

In many ways El Salvador is representative of the kinds of problems the US will continue to face. Problems in El Salvador and elsewhere around the world are rooted in class disparity, politically underrepresented masses, economic disparity, and feelings of hopelessness. Solutions to such complex problems call for interagency responses above

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[15] Admiral Paul David Miller, *The Interagency Process: Engaging America's Full National Security Capabilities*, National Security paper 11 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1993), 5.
[16] Miller, 41.
[17] William W. Mendel and David G. Bradford, *Interagency Cooperation: A Regional Model for Overseas Operations, McNair Paper 37,* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, March 1995) in Joint Pub 3-08, Volume I, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (Washington D.C., 9 October 1996), I-3.

and beyond traditional military means. The governing Salvadoran elite had little incentive to democratize the country and relinquish their power to the poor, landless, and uneducated peasants. Nonetheless, the interagency team had to convince the Salvadorans to voluntarily change their ways. The complex FID problem in El Salvador called for a coherent, timely, and cooperative multi-agency response from the United States. Preventing the spread of communism entailed the artful blending of all the instruments of US and Salvadoran power, cooperation between various inherently adversarial bureaucracies, and mutually supportive civil-military relationships. Outwardly, the FMLN constituted a serious threat to the legitimate Salvadoran regime and US advisers, but there were other internal pressures to consider within the combined US-Salvadoran governmental effort. First, counterinsurgency doctrine required political, economic, social, and military reforms—collaborative initiatives which exceeded the boundaries of any one agency. Second, organizational theory warned of the difficulty in attaining recurrent cross-agency cooperation. And third, civil-military differences posed peculiar hazards for interagency dealings. In El Salvador the mission was to combat insurgents, but the principles and many of the tasks required to succeed then and there, apply today and elsewhere in waging the wars against drugs, terror, anarchy, and other worrisome problems. The solution to these problems has been termed the interagency process.

Few cases could be more apropos or telling about the complex interagency problems such US agencies will continue to encounter. USAID, the primary civilian agency involved with the US military in remedying the many ills of Salvadoran society, is an agency the military must include in most of its operational strategies. USAID is

conducting operations all over the world, even before the military arrives, and they carry on after the military leaves. Lieutenant General Peter Schoomaker, former Commander of US Army Special Operations Command, recently argued: "Special operators are in 81 countries today. The problem is not whether we (in SOF) will continue to be called upon, but whether we can continue to be up to the challenge."[18] The need for civil-military cooperation, as was the case in El Salvador, is an imperative that bodes well for the future.

The "ground truth" about the Salvadoran advisory effort, according to my Special Forces thesis advisor, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Higgins,[19] has been buried by volumes of misinformation as the same few sources quote and re-quote each other. Retired Colonel Emil "Butch" Roper, an Army officer who served in El Salvador said it best: "Every time I read something about the war in El Sal (sic)—they get it all wrong!"[20] With this project, I have the unique opportunity to set the record straight on a variety of timely and pertinent topics. I relied on firsthand interviews of servicemen and civilians who were directly involved in the Salvadoran counterinsurgency effort to provide the details in Chapter III that other authors have overlooked. Instead of limiting my interviews to the senior leaders, I solicited views from all levels. The other big

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[18] LTG Peter Schoomaker, USASOC Commander, 13 August 1997 audience with SOLIC students attending the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. General Schoomaker is now the Commander-in-Chief, United States Special Operations Command.

[19] Special Forces officer LTC Kevin Higgins completed two tours as an "advisor" in El Salvador. His initial OPATT tour was in 1983-84, then again in 1987-88. He is a regional expert. He has made a distinguished career out of studying and practicing the business of irregular warfare and special operations. There are very few more credible sources of "ground truth" when it comes to the Salvadoran counterinsurgency effort.

[20] Opinion expressed to author during 13 May 1997 interview in Seaside, California. Special Forces Colonel Roper held two jobs during the Stage I of the war: 1) Senior OPATT, and 2) Civil Defense Coordinator.

attraction to this case study is that it is still ongoing; the war is over, but the postwar reconciliation is not.

D. FINDINGS

The Salvadoran case study supports the argument that senior leadership intervention in the form of clear guidance, persistent emphasis, and continual support from key figures is a prerequisite for achieving interagency unity of effort. I found that without the ardent support of the Ambassador, MILGP Commander, and the Director of USAID, the two distinct organizations would have endured an extended period of disarray as they continued to stay in their respective lanes. From the point of view of this outside observer, however, getting the senior leadership on board to support interagency initiatives seemed to be a foregone conclusion given the mounting frustration bubbling up from the working levels of each agency. Would senior leader intervention alone been enough to secure unity of effort? Is it the most important determinant for success? It is hard to say, but probably not.

Another part of my argument addresses the prerequisites for improved interagency coordination—a requirement for unity of effort. It states that trust, stakes, and shared experiences are the most important determinants of interagency process improvements. Trust in individuals often translates into trust in the agencies they represent. People work best with other people whom they know and trust. The more they work together with positive results, the more confidence they gain in each other, and the more willing they are to go to greater lengths to maintain their established bonds and reputations. Shared experiences help build trust and establish working relationships that serve as foundations for all subsequent interagency initiatives. Track records are

important, as are the measures of personal and organizational vested interests. I hypothesized that levels of trust, with respect to people, first, and organizations, second, were key determinants of effective interagency coordination.

One of my interesting findings is that the variables play differing roles depending upon the stage of the conflict. I broke the conflict into three stages: Stage I, the period of the war prior to the development of a national strategy (or NCP) of any sort, is pre-1983. Stage II continued until 1987 when the *Municipos en Acción* (MEA) program kicked in, the FMLN adapted their tactics to concentrate on economic sabotage, and various peace initiatives arrived on the scene. And finally, Stage III was the last part of the war, ending in 1992 when the Peace Accords were signed.

Of the three variables, trust and shared experiences did contribute to good coordination, but higher or lower stakes did not seem to correlate with better or worse coordination. In Stage II of the war, the stakes went up (as did interagency coordination) as each agency responded to pressure from Washington, but when the stakes went down as it became evident that the guerrillas could not win, interagency coordination did not degenerate. Does this weaken the causal link of stakes versus interagency coordination? If the stakes had not changed, would coordination still have improved? It is difficult to say because the stakes were fairly high to begin with. The stakes probably had to at least be high enough to attract the attention of the senior leaders and to get the ball rolling. Human nature being what it is, it seems that shared experiences inevitably led to more trust. The two go hand-in-glove.

Recognizing the resource constraints on people, equipment, and money, I tried to correlate the variables of constrained resources and the irregular nature of the conflict

with improvements in interagency support. Restricting the numbers of US advisers, types and amounts military hardware, and tying financial aid to human rights improvements complicated the tasks of each organization. It meant that each soon realized that coordination in the name of mutual interagency support had to take place before they could meet their individual goals. Congress kept a tight rein on operations which eventually drove each agency to develop techniques to alleviate shortfalls. Does more money help or hurt interagency coordination? More money meant more eyes watching over how it was spent and gave rise to less-flexible bureaucracies. However, since USAID had most of the money allocated for the counterinsurgency effort, the SF teams necessarily coordinated with, and solicited support from, different USAID project managers. The question became not how much money, but where, when, and to whom? Interagency coordination at the "worker bee" level resulted in the most effective allocation of funds given the endemic risk of graft, albeit it risky and highly irregular—giving cash directly to the rural mayors under the auspices of the MEA program. Mutual support required regular information-sharing to take place, and it did so in the vein of constrained resources and irregular warfare.

Of the two variables, the nature of the conflict, as it changed from a military war of attrition to a broader competition for "hearts and minds", demanded mutual interagency support. Resources became less constrained during Stage II of the war, yet mutual interagency support still improved. Then, when the resources were more constrained again during Stage III, the degree of mutual interagency support was about the same.

Colonel John Waghelstein, the MILGP commander during Stage I of the war, was frustrated when the number of US advisers was set by Congress at the seemingly nonsensical limit of 55. Later, after all was said and done, he agreed—smaller is better, in the business of irregular warfare.[21] But then again, is that the American way? In 1979, the plan was to start with 55 trainers, then fill out their ranks as the situation developed. The proposed larger contingent was 250 personnel, but 55 turned out to be a non-negotiable number. Presumably 55 seemed only to be an 80 percent solution, but disunity flourished as more people entered the fray. My research supports Colonel Waghelstein's and others' contention that limiting the numbers of personnel involved produces better results in such conflicts. Smaller turned out to be better in terms of facilitating the personality-driven interagency projects.

To summarize the results of my causal analysis of the six independent variables: senior leadership intervention, trust, shared experiences, and the nature of the conflict—these four independent variables had profound effects upon USMILGP/USAID unity of effort in El Salvador. Contrary to subsets of my original argument, two of the independent variables make sense intuitively, but further analysis shows weak causal links. Higher stakes did not noticeably affect interagency coordination, and lower resource constraints did not influence mutual interagency support.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

Four recommendations may be derived from my research in light of the inevitability of future interagency operations: 1) Conduct interagency exercises,

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[21] John D. Waghelstein, "Ruminations of a Pachyderm or What I Learned in the Counterinsurgency Business," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* ,Vol. 5, (London, England: Frank Cass Publishers, Winter 1994), 361.

2) Invest in the people who will do them, 2) Educate the leaders, and 4) Develop interagency organizations.

First, conducting interagency exercises is a good way (a necessary way) to educate the leaders as well as the practitioners. Operations in Panama, Haiti, and Somalia—to name only a recent few—all were interagency efforts. It is not enough to practice joint operations; interagency scenarios are more probable and more difficult. Realistic multi-agency exercises would encourage combined civil-military courses of action while providing the shared experiences that develop trust and better understanding. Senior leaders and operators from all manner of national agencies could thus be better prepared when real problems arise.

Second, all of the variables examined in this thesis depend upon people to achieve the elusive condition of interagency unity. Only people demonstrate the flexibility and finesse required to succeed in interagency operations, but each person will operate differently. If people matter most, then invest in people. What kind of people? The doers; the people who personify US policy and protect American interests under uncertain and difficult circumstances. Do not just say it—do it![22] The greatest weapon a special operator wields is his or her brain. Learning to think about difficult problems takes education, training, initiative, and practice. Regional expertise is more than being able to speak a language; it takes experience. Cross-cultural communications must also be honed in the field. The people involved in interagency efforts must be get to know the people in the other agencies, develop trust, and shape the deals required for

[22] It seems that SOCOM's leadership is about to "do it". On 13 August 1997, before an audience of SOLIC students attending the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California Lieutenant General

mission success. They get to know each other by living, training, and working together. The alienation of civilian agencies from military organizations, and vice versa, is an outdated custom that the world's preeminent democracy can ill afford. The skillful blending required to forge effective interagency teams must be proactive and deliberate, rather than an ad hoc affair. This is the skill required of modern "warrior-diplomats"[23] who make up the special operations forces. It is invaluable. It is a bargain, but it is not cheap.

Third, the leaders who will guide and help forge these interagency teams also need to be educated. In El Salvador, the US advisers and trainers on the ground (in harm's way) could not count on trust from their own senior leaders in Washington. Ambassadors, commanders, directors, or policy makers—every one of these senior leaders can make a big difference in how the US government conveys, translates, or implements policy. They need to appreciate (not just pay lip service to) how State department and defense agencies will act upon their guidance. When US personnel are jeopardizing their lives in the pursuit of poorly-defined objectives or to solve improperly diagnosed problems, politics can literally kill. Fewer civilian leaders today have military experience. Consequently, they may be more apt to view the military, especially special operators, as reckless, trigger-happy, or otherwise incapable of handling matters that require diplomacy and tact. Deliberate efforts need to be made to educate these key senior leaders to develop mutual trust and confidence.

(LTG) Peter Schoomaker, Commanding General, US Army Special Operations (USASOC), stated that **education**—as opposed to training—is SOCOM's first priority.

[23] Ambassador H. Allen Holmes, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Low Intensity Conflict characterizes SOF personnel as "warrior diplomats."

Fourth, if the interagency approach is best, but complicated by organizational pressures, then why not create interagency organizations? Policy makers must institutionalize the interagency process at the highest levels. This is perhaps the easiest to say, hardest to do, and least likely to happen anytime soon. That said, this is an imperative. The "joint" train has already left the station. It will take years before the military begins to really practice what is preached and recorded in joint doctrine. True jointness has yet to arrive and begin to re-color unified organizations and operations. Good—because "purple" is no longer the color in vogue. Interagency operations are here to stay and the organizations need to support them. Without institutionalizing interagency emphasis, too much unity of effort will be sacrificed until the workarounds get in place. Organizations need to especially change to support time-critical interagency operations like counter-terrorist and counter-proliferation responses, for example.[24]

F. STRUCTURE

The next chapter contains the supporting bodies of theory which help explain the way distinct civil-military organizations should interact during an interagency effort. These three pertinent areas of literature include: counterinsurgency doctrine, organization theory, and civil-military relations theory.

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[24] Author David Tucker describes the evolution of the US counter-terrorism (CT) organization(s) and predominately ad hoc interagency response in his book: *Skirmishes at the Edge of Empire: The United States and International Terrorism* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1997), pp. 224. His book is especially germane to the interagency debate because CT is a high visibility example of the US choosing an interagency response over tidier unilateral options.

Chapter III establishes the context for my study by detailing the evolution of The National Plan. Setting the stage for my analysis, in this chapter I explain how and why USAID and the USMILGP operated in El Salvador during different stages of the war.

Chapter IV contains my analysis of six key variables to determine their impact on interagency cooperation and unity of effort. This is where I test my argument. Six independent variables are analyzed at individual, institutional, and national levels, and during three different stages of the war to determine the extent of their bearing on interagency unity of effort. Additionally, some comparisons are made to the interpretations of policy on the ground in El Salvador versus the directions issued from Washington. Written plans are also compared to the events they were meant to coordinate.

Chapter V summarizes the case study results and succinctly delivers the bottom lines. This is the chapter which explains why what happened—did happen. In that chapter I also draw some conclusions and suggest what my contributions mean for current and future interagency operations.

II. THEORY

A. OVERVIEW

There have been many recent interagency operations: El Salvador, Panama, Kuwait,[25] Somalia,[26] Haiti, Bosnia, Korea . . . Interagency operations are inescapable—today's *modus operandi*, but the literature on the interagency process is scant. There has been very little serious analysis of the practical impediments to interagency operations and how they can be overcome. Former US Atlantic Command Commander-in-Chief Admiral Paul David Miller described the interagency concept in his 1993 paper called: *The Interagency Process: Engaging America's Full National Security Capabilities*.[27] Robert Murray, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Naval Analyses *and* former Under Secretary of the Navy wrote the foreword to Admiral Miller's seminal work. Murray said: "[M]any challenges in our society cut across traditional boundaries of government institutions; problems often cannot be understood, nor adequate solutions defined, within a single agency . . . the threat to effectual policy and, especially, effective execution, lies at the boundaries between agencies, where cohesion is least and bureaucratic conflict greatest."[28] Admiral Miller's work highlighted the challenges posed during the ad hoc US interagency responses to various

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[25] According to John T. Fishel, *Liberation, Occupation, and Rescue: War Termination and Desert Storm* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 31 August 1992), 22: 27 separate federal agencies were involved in the planning process for post-Desert Storm operations in Kuwait due to lessons learned in Panama.

[26] "In Somalia alone, there were some 78 private organizations contributing relief support, and assisting the UN relief in the Rwanda crisis were over 100 relief organizations. Over 350 such organizations are registered with USAID." [26] Joint Pub 3-08, Volume I, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (Washington D.C., 9 October 1996), II-19.

[27] Admiral Paul David Miller, *The Interagency Process: Engaging America's Full National Security Capabilities*, National Security Paper 11 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1993).

[28] Ibid, V.

crises and made a convincing argument for developing the interagency process as one of three distinct policy environments: joint military operations, the interagency process, and multi-national efforts. Miller acknowledged the need for "an effective means of tapping the strengths of all the actors in the interagency process."[29] He proposed organizational structure changes—the formation of interagency actions groups (IAGs) as a way to improve the interagency operating mechanism, but then he neglected to point out what critical actions need to take place in the field to ensure success in difficult interagency operations.

The collection of literature about interagency operations leaves it up to the reader (and more importantly, the practitioners) to determine and develop causal determinants of success. To me, this constitutes a significant gap in interagency literature. Besides Miller's work, there is an excellent historical accounting of the interagency pacification effort in Vietnam—CORDS,[30] a couple of more recent interagency papers published by the National Defense University,[31] and a new two-volume Joint Publication 3-08 entitled: *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*.[32] Joint Pub 3-08 outlines the Interagency Process and participants and explains the evolving role of the US military within the Interagency Process. Though Joint Pub 3-08 reaffirms the importance of interagency coordination and unity of effort,

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[29] Ibid, 3.

[30] Thomas W. Scoville, *Reorganizing for Pacification Support* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1982), pp. 83.

[31] Margaret Daly Hayes and Radm Gary F. Wheatley, *Interagency and Political-Military Dimensions of Peace Operations: Haiti~A Case Study* (Washington, D.C.: Directorate of Advanced Concepts, Technologies, and Information Strategies/Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University,1996), pp. 65. *and* William W. Mendel and David G. Bradford, *Interagency Cooperation: A Regional Model for Overseas Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 1995), pp. 99.

it still leaves room for this thesis to determine the most important variables for future interagency operations. The interagency process recognizes that increasingly task-unified[33] forces are required to conduct a variety of operations in support of other US government or international agencies needing help. Raach and Kass argue that: "When working properly, the interagency process determines the national interests at stake, defines immediate- and long-term objectives, and considers the best ways of achieving ends with minimal risks."[34] Planning a strategic, synergistic interagency response which necessarily depends upon teamwork, cooperation, and mutual support is only part of the solution, however. Significant impediments to unity of effort must be recognized, understood, and overcome if such a response is to be greater than the sum of all its parts. Mendel and Bradford, in their case study analysis of interagency cooperation explained: "This is a multi-agency environment, where cooperation is essential, but it is also defined by competition for recognition and resources."[35] Cooperation—much less integration of competing efforts—is difficult, but necessary. Personnel within competing agencies often view cooperation as being counterproductive, even threatening to their organizational imperatives or allegiances. Joint Pub 3-08, the most recent publication that could have spelled out interagency imperatives, passes the buck. It states: "Additionally, there is no overarching interagency doctrine that delineates or dictates the relationships and procedures governing all agencies, departments, and

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[32] Joint Pub 3-08, Volumes I and II, pp. 95; pp. 273. The first volume contains concepts and guidance; the second, terms and agencies.
[33] I chose the term, "task-unified forces" to convey the idea that these are dissimilar agencies that are forced to work together in order to attain common goals or complete cooperative tasks.
[34] George T. Raach and Ilana Kass, "National Power and the Interagency Process," *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Summer 1995), 9.
[35] Mendel and Bradford, 5.

interagency operations. Nor is there an overseeing organization to ensure that the myriad agencies . . . have the capability and tools to work together."[36] Taken as a whole, the interagency literature acknowledges the difficulties inherent in interagency operations and describes many of the probable pitfalls, but suggests that the answers lie in improved operating mechanisms rather than personal training and relationships. It seems to me that the IAGs are founded upon core competencies at the working level and that is where the emphasis belongs.

Regrettably, this interagency literature is still too underdeveloped for me to extrapolate useful imperatives from, then test against the case of El Salvador. Therefore, I derived my argument about why and how interagency operations can succeed from the opinions of those involved in actual operations in El Salvador. Lending credence to the opinions of USAID officials and military advisers, I also found three robust fields of literature which help describe and predict the interagency obstacles faced by USAID and the USMILGP in El Salvador: 1) Counterinsurgency Theory, 2) Organization Theory, and 3) Civil-Military Relations Theory.

Why did I turn to this literature? Counterinsurgency doctrine maintains that rarely is killing the guerrillas enough to put down an insurgency—rather it requires a complex, simultaneous campaign involving political, economic, social, and military actions. The campaign in El Salvador was directed by the Ambassador through his Country Team. The Country Team typified the interagency challenge since each of its members served not only the Ambassador, but also their parent organizations. Next, the dynamics and pressures involved within and between organizations is detailed in a rich

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[36] Joint Pub 3-08, I-4-I-5. Paragraph 4. Continues: "The interagency process is often described as *more*

body of organizational literature. Organization theory describes the difficulty in attaining interagency collaboration, and predicts probable failure. Civil-military relations was the final body of literature I chose because cross-agency cooperation was obviously exacerbated because these dissimilar agencies could not help but view the Salvadoran venture from totally different perspectives: one civilian, the other military. I turned to these three bodies of literature to ask: In the case of USAID and the USMILGP in El Salvador, what were their probable perspectives and what were the odds of finding the requisite middle ground in order to carry out US policy?

1. Counterinsurgency Theory

The roots of US counterinsurgency doctrine extend back to the turn of the century when US Army General J. Franklin Bell conducted a counterinsurgency campaign in the Philippine Islands.[37] His successful campaign engaged all the resources in every sphere (political, economic, cultural, and military) and empirically developed the counterinsurgency techniques that would form the basis of US low intensity conflict doctrine. The US Marine Corps published their major doctrinal work, *The Small Wars Manual*, in 1940 following their counterinsurgency experiences in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and particularly, Nicaragua, during the 1915-1934 period known colloquially as the "Banana Wars".[38] The authors of *The Small Wars Manual* emphasized, "The motive in small wars is not material destruction. It is usually a project dealing with

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art than science while military operations tend to depend on structure and doctrine."

[37] The argument can be made that the origins of counterinsurgency doctrine extend back much farther into the history of warfare in all its forms. The important point here is that the roots are deep and well-established.

[38] Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press,1986), 96.

social, economic and political development of a people . . . That implies a serious study of people, their racial, political, religious and mental development."[39]

The doctrine was soon tested and successfully applied in the Philippines during the 1946-1954 Hukbalahap (or Huk) rebellion. Though most of the learning points derived from this successful counterinsurgency effort were narrowly tactical in focus, they did emphasize civil measures over military means, or at least the civic action over the firefight.[40] Author Larry Cable wrote: "The Philippine experience indicated strongly that military operations were best limited to a few, discrete roles."[41] The focus of such discrete roles is also critical. In considering civic projects, one should remember that the villagers' view of revolution—for all its narrowness and "localness"—must be incorporated into any counter-revolutionary project if it is to acquire rural support at all.[42]

US counterinsurgency doctrine is rooted in a variety of examples from around the world. Although no two insurgencies were alike, they gave rise to a doctrine which holds that removing the root causes of an insurgency (social, economic, and political injustice) requires a closely coordinated civil-military campaign plan. There have been many counterinsurgency efforts since the Philippines. For the US, however, modern counterinsurgency doctrine began in Vietnam with the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program. Author Thomas Scoville brings to light one aspect of the interagency problem in Vietnam: "Until the creation of

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[39] United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual (SWM)* (Washington, D.C.: HQMC 1940), I-10-18.
[40] Cable, 62.
[41] Cable, 63.

CORDS in 1967,[43] many Americans involved in South Vietnam, depending on their outlook or on which government agency they worked for, saw pacification as either civil or military but not as a joint civil-military process."[44] A joint civil-military process was precisely what CORDS embodied with civilians exercising control over the military majority.[45] "CORDS represented not so much a military takeover of pacification as the formation of an ad hoc civil-military hybrid," according to Andrew Krepinevich.[46] CORDS had responsibility for establishing and implementing all plans and operations in support of pacification, to include advising and training paramilitary units to provide local security. In the end, despite its progress in the area of pacification, the civil-military CORDS program was no match for the Army's organizational philosophy which prioritized military operations that worked against pacification rather than in support of it.[47] There is an ongoing debate about whether the CORDS approach would have produced better results under different circumstances, or which parts of the concept were more viable than others. Certainly the irregular civil-military CORDS approach encountered stiff resistance from the Viet Cong, but its greatest barriers seem

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[42] This idea is adapted from a similar phrase by James C. Scott in his article, "Revolution is the Revolution: Peasants and Commissars," *Theory and Society* (Department of Political Science, Yale University, 1979), 115.

[43] "In 1961 President John F. Kennedy made two decisions that perpetuated the lack of centralized control in South Vietnam. In May of that year, rather than appoint single managers in the field and Washington to oversee all U.S. operations related to the war in South Vietnam, he reserved responsibility for coordination and direction to himself, his White House staff, and ad hoc interagency task forces that turned out to exercise little real control. Scoville, 5.

[44] Ibid, 3-4.

[45] "Although at peak strength the military component of CORDS would outnumber the civilian element by roughly 6 to 1 (about 6,500 to 1,100), civilians held most of the top positions and exercised a measure of control greatly disproportionate to their numbers." Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 217-218.

[46] Ibid, 217.

[47] "The Army's general view of the role of pacification was characterized by Lieutenant General Ewell, who said, 'I had two rules. One is that you would try to get a very close meshing of pacification . . . and

to have been in the pervasive home-grown impediments to such interagency operations: bureaucracy, organizational culture, parochialism, turf wars, civil-military competition, inflexibility, and unrealistic expectations. No agency left Vietnam unscathed. Since the US did not win, the military blamed the civilians and the civilians followed suit by pointing fingers of their own. By the end of the ordeal, and for some years to come, neither entity liked—or trusted—the other very much. Vietnam, by and large, left a bad taste in the mouths of senior USAID and USMILGP officials. Joint Pub 3-08 acknowledged the interagency disunity that characterized operations in Vietnam: "The Vietnam conflict was often fraught with inefficiency among the myriad of US government agencies. Each of these agencies operated independently, without much interagency coordination, and each was satisfied that its individual interests were being met. The consequence was a seemingly incoherent war effort."[48] Each agency blamed the other for failures in the prosecution of the Vietnam campaign; widespread distrust, skepticism, and externalized blame persisted. In counterinsurgencies the root of the problem is how best to win the hearts and minds of the populace. The mission is a multi-agency undertaking.

2. Organization Theory

Before a nation can begin to mount a successful and coherent counterinsurgency campaign involving multiple agencies in an effort to make orchestrated changes in several interdependent arenas (economic, political, social, and military) teamwork must me achieved. Teamwork involves coordination, trust, and mutual support.

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military operations. The other rule is the *military operations would be given priority in every case.*" Ibid, 222.

[48] Joint Pub 3-08, III-8.

Organization theory suggests that herein lies the dilemma. Success requires all the competing agencies to put aside their differences to work together toward a common good, but organizations (as well as the people within them) see the competition in terms of the survival of the fittest. Cooperating with a competing agency may require disruption of the status quo, relinquishing hard-earned turf, or compromising organizational culture for the sake of intangible returns and greater uncertainty. Job security and organizational performance are measured, justified, and evaluated based on mostly short-term egocentric norms, leaving little incentive to cooperate with outside agencies regardless of political, magnanimous cross-agency rhetoric. Interagency coordination sounds good and makes sense, but organization theory says that it is a pipe dream.

Graham T. Allison developed useful conceptual models that help explain the organizational and political processes.[49] Drawing upon organizational behavior theory, he distills the ideas into analytic frames, or paradigms, which he labels Model II and Model III. Model II is the Organizational Process Model and Model III he calls the Governmental (Bureaucratic) Politics Model. The two models, when used together, go a long way towards explaining why organizations behave the way they do.

Model II, the Organizational Process Model, holds that projects which require coordination between different programs of several organizations are likely to fail. Interagency committees are often formed because the problem of coordination is pervasive, but they are rarely effective because a president, governor, or ambassador cannot devote attention to more than a handful of such entities and just a few can

appreciably alter agency tasks. Harold Seidman and Robert Gilmour put it best, I think: "Interagency committees are the crabgrass in the garden of government."[50] A government perceives problems through organizational sensors. Seidman and Gilmour explain: "Governments define alternatives and estimate consequences as their component organizations process information; governments act as these organizations enact routines."[51] Allison says organizations are no more homogenous than solids (all parts are not equally flexible) and consequently expand, contract, and react only under certain conditions. The specific conditions are largely a function of perceptions and parochial priorities.

Model II highlights the effects of "bounded rationality" in organizational behavior. Faced with complex problems, organizations will parcel out various pieces of the problem, thereby fractionating power.[52] "Satisficing" or "good-enough" choices emerge from the conflicting pressures to maintain the smooth status quo while satisfying the customers. Avoiding uncertainty overrides the need to develop long-range strategies so organizations will spend most of their time "stomping out fires" in lieu of... Solutions to irregular problems are often a function of limited organizational repertoires, inevitably restricting options to off-the-shelf standard operations procedures (SOPs), established programs, and other solutions bounded by perceptions of administrative feasibility. For the most part "change is bad" in organizations.

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[49] Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Massachusetts: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971), 5.
[50] Harold Seidman and Robert Gilmour, *Politics, Position, and Power*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press,1986), 226.
[51] Allison, 167. The *standard*, repetitive and predictive patterns of organizational behavior are what make this model most powerful.
[52] Fractionated power is seen best in large organizations such as the Departments of Defense, State, and Treasury; the Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, and others.

Model III, the Governmental Politics Model, goes a step further than the Model II analysis by recognizing that the leaders on top of these organizations are not a monolithic group. The fundamental truths offered by Model III are that the power and skill of the individual political actors are crucial for understanding a particular organization's behavior. This model "sees no unitary actor but rather many actors as players—players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra-national problems as well; players who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals; players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics."[53] Joint Pub 3-08 emphasizes: "Personal relationships have dominated interagency operations from Landsdale and Magsaysay in the Philippines, to Duarte and Pickering, Corr and Woerner in El Salvador. Successful interagency cooperation rests in no small part on the ability of . . . departments and agencies to personally work together."[54]

According to this model, why a decision is made is a function of games and players, coalitions, bargains, compromises, and state of confusion. Besides individual choices, the aggregate includes the results of minor games, central games, and foul-ups. Minor games include administrative deadlines and "wordsmithing" exercises. The bureaucratic attitude under pressure becomes: "Make a decision—we can change it later if we have to," or "We need to word this directive to leave room for other options down the road." Central games include the doling out of individual project assignments among lower-level players. Reputation and parochial priorities make a difference.

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[53] Allison, 144.

Where a player stands on a particular issue depends largely upon where he sits.[55] Allison states: "Members of an organization, particularly career officials, come to believe that the health of their organization is vital to national interest."[56] This is the basis of the argument that an organization's primary function is to ensure it survives. Foul-ups are choices made because they were not recognized or surfaced too late. The "mis-es" enter into play—misperception, misexpectation, and miscommunication.

3. Civil-Military Relations Theory

Civil-military relations are also part of the problem in achieving elusive interagency cooperation. The problem is not the usual concern of theorists—issues of civilian control of the military or the likelihood of a coup d'état. My concern is very different. Diverse cultural perspectives lead to contrary ways of solving problems and the perceptions that military and civilian agencies have of each other. If USAID consisted of a bunch of hippies, then the USMILGP, dominated by Special Forces, was populated by bloodthirsty snake-eaters. For each group incredible impediments to unified operations flourished in their respective cultures, historical track records, reputations, procedural norms, and inherent distrust of one another.

Problems arise in the areas of civil-military relations when the military is ordered to accomplish a complicated mission while working for, and with, less efficient, slower, or otherwise disorganized civilian agencies. "For military officers used to a defined framework and clear-cut decisionmaking the interagency arena can be especially frustrating. Unlike the structured coordination of military staffs, membership in the

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[54] Joint Pub 3-08, I-8.

[55] James Q. Wilson talks about this in his excellent book, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 68.

interagency process is not fixed and varies from crisis to crisis," explain Raach and Kass.[57] They continue, saying: "In the military system position is important, while in the interagency process personalities are key."[58] Organizational cultures and philosophies frequently clash as each agency tries to accomplish the mission in its own way. Regardless of whether the military could accomplish the mission better, sometimes the civil-military oxymoron becomes the pragmatic hindrance that dictates sub-optimal institutional relationships. Military organizations are supposedly designed to rapidly assess problems, make plans to correct and control their environment, then implement them. Regulations, SOPs, training, professionalism, unity of effort, command and control, coordination, and other determinants of military success—all these qualities combine to make the military a force-at-the ready for carrying out policy actions. The established chains of command are designed for efficiency, speed, and control.[59] The military is not necessarily the force of choice, yet for want of alternatives, it is routinely the organization used to rapidly project power throughout the international arena.

Civil-military relations in El Salvador were complicated by the fact that the US needed to set the example for a regime that needed to transition from a corrupt, authoritarian military style of government to a functioning democracy controlled by its citizenry. "Do as we say—not as we do!" would probably not suffice if squelching the insurgency meant subordinating the civilians to the military leadership for very long.

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[56] Allison, 167.
[57] Raach and Kass, 10.
[58] Ibid, 11.

The external interagency civil-military dilemma was in how to strengthen the Salvadoran military machine while not exacerbating its status as a largely self-contained and distinct society and subculture. The Salvadoran military would have to eventually be subordinated to civilian control and supportive of its citizenry, without allowing the guerrillas to win.

The internal (or between US agencies) civil-military relations were also dubious. In 1988, 15 years after the Vietnam war ended, perhaps civil-military friction prevailed among the Country Team participants attending a festive hail and farewell barbecue. Lieutenant Colonel Homer Harkins, Army Special Forces Civil Defense Adviser during Stage III of the war, interpreted a telling incident in San Salvador which for him conveyed truth in the form of a joke: "Someone accidentally set something on fire—we were barbecuing or something—and everybody was looking over there and they dropped it on the ground and stomped on it . . . It was an Army guy who started it and a State department guy who put it out . . . and some State department guy made the comment: There's the military; they know how to start a fire, but they don't know how to put it out!" He continued to say, "Sometimes jokes have a grain of truth to them and I think . . . we thought the State department people didn't have a clue as to what was going on . . . and I think a lot of that came from the Vietnam experience . . .There was a lot of *trust but verify* going on."[60]

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[59] An argument could be easily made that the basic military bureaucracies are very rigid and hierarchical and as such, not very efficient at all. Nonetheless, the military structures are well known, established, and organized to accommodate friction in combat.

[60] 30 May 1997 telephone interview with author.

B. SUMMARY

The elaborate counterinsurgency campaign in El Salvador called for a unified effort encompassing all the instruments of national power in an interagency undertaking. Such an interagency effort would require interagency cooperation as a prerequisite for achieving unity of effort. Finding the literature on interagency operations woefully inadequate for deriving testable hypotheses, I analyzed three germane bodies of theory: counterinsurgency doctrine, organization theory, and civil-military relations. Theoretical literature reveals that interagency coordination, especially between civilian and military agencies, is plagued by serious impediments that make it most likely unachievable and at best, very hard to do.

While counterinsurgency principles dictate requisite interagency cooperation in a synergistic scheme, organization theory says organizations prioritize their own self-interests and act in accordance with parochial priorities. Counterinsurgency plans are necessarily fluid; forever changing in response to irregular, asymmetric guerrilla strategies. The winning campaign demands initiatives in every sphere—economic, political, social, and military—and that requires working with multiple, dissimilar agencies. The key to success is effective interagency coordination and mutual support. On top of everything else, bipolar civil-military cultures make a hard task harder and interagency dealings are bound to be complicated by historical distrust and friction.

Organization Theory reveals the complexity of interagency operations from two perspectives. The organizational process viewpoint holds that interagency committees are the crabgrass of bureaucracy and those projects which require coordination between different programs of several agencies will probably fail. Organizations deal with

complex problems by parceling out pieces of the problem, thereby fractionating power. By and large, "satisficing" solutions emerge from off-the-shelf responses that avoid uncertainty in favor of maintaining the status quo—change is bad! The bureaucratic politics viewpoint sees the organization not as a unitary actor, but rather as a medley of players who make inconsistent decisions and are influenced by the pulling and hauling that is politics. Personalities matter from the bureaucratic politics standpoint and unless they are factored into the interagency process, effective coordination will not happen. Taken together, these characteristics of organization theory indicate that organizations foremost look out for themselves and individual personalities can be the most important and elusive determinants of success or failure. A concerted effort must be made at all levels to foster trust and mutual support between individual players before they can be expected to overcome their institutional biases for a greater common good. Nurturing better relations between these actors seems to be paramount for improved interagency unity of effort. On the other hand, "[p]ersonalities can dominate interagency deliberations—especially if process management is ineffective—and personal or organizational agendas may take precedent over larger crisis-related issues."[61]

[61] Raach and Kass, 11.

III. CASE STUDY: El SALVADOR

A. OVERVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the evolution of The National Plan and explain how and why USAID and the USMILGP operated in El Salvador during various stages of the war. Context matters in this chapter because it establishes the facts that will serve as the basis for my analysis in the next chapter. My focus is on the activities and procedures which necessitated cross-agency cooperation and coordination. I begin with a description of each agency and establish their purpose for being. Then I describe the growth and change of overall US policy which detailed the purposes for US intervention, thereby driving the plans and programs of each agency. The programs are introduced as subsets of the ever-changing National Plan. Military and land reform programs were undertaken, but they entailed little interagency coordination between USAID and the USMILGP, and therefore will not be discussed. This chapter will cover those programs that directly involved both agencies: civil defense, infrastructure development, and civic action. In accordance with counterinsurgency doctrine, each program aimed at reforming at least one of the four types of national power.[62] In the process of researching the country of El Salvador and its peoples, I discovered that the written history varies considerably, painting different versions of "ground truth." Naturally, these different historical accounts generate contrary conclusions about success, failure, improvements, efficiencies, progress, motives, and so on. El Salvador has a long history of Indian and peasant revolts motivated by social and economic

[62] Counterinsurgency doctrine calls for reforms in: 1) Military, 2) Economics, 3) Political, and 4) Social. President Reagan's "4 D's" as described in The Kissinger Commission Report called for: 1) Defense, 2)

injustices.[63] To understand the extent of the dilemma which faced US policy makers, it is necessary to probe into the darker chapters of Salvadoran history.[64] Certain factors described below may influence this thesis more than others, but all contribute to a better understanding of the environment faced by USAID and USMILGP personnel.

B. THE AGENCIES

The USMILGP served two masters. The MILGP Commander answered to the Ambassador and to the Commander-in Chief, Southern Command. As the personal representative of the President of the United States, the Ambassador executes the US diplomatic mission and controls all in-country US government personnel through his staff, The Country Team. In country, the Ambassador is the boss. In an ideal Country Team as envisioned by Joint Pub 3-07.1—free from prejudices, civil-military tensions,

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Development, 3) Democracy, and 4) Dialogue. The 4 D's seem like the same ideas, just different packaging.

[63] It became clear at the start that their are relatively few original perspectives about the roots of revolution and society in El Salvador. Instead, what one finds is a plethora of studies which seem to reinforce the views of a few and have thus become accepted as "the ground truth." There can be no getting around the fact that every author (most very convincingly) portrayed El Salvador's problems with a certain degree of bias. For a synopsis of historical peasant revolutions, read Tommie Sue Montgomery's book, *Revolution in El Salvador: Origins and Evolution,* int. Roman Mayorga Quiroz (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1982), Ch 2, 27-53. In Montgomery's Second Edition, *Revolution in El Salvador: From Civil Strife to Civil Peace* (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1995), 25, she details an historical pattern which included exploitation of the labor supply, first the Indians and later the peasants. I contend that this is true—but only part of the phenomena.

[64] This is easier said than done because most of these "darker chapters" are unwritten—purposely so—by the earliest repressive governments. A defining period for Salvadoran Indians and peasant consciousness can be traced to the abortive peasant/Indian uprising of 1932. Heeding the call by communist, *Agustin Farabundo Martí*, Indian peasants and *campesinos* (farmers or farm laborers) launched one of the bloodiest revolts in the history of Latin America. The causes for the revolt stemmed from antagonism between the landed gentry and the *campesinos*, racism in the Sonsanate area among Indian and Ladino cultures, economic strain during the great depression, bad government, and communist agents who preyed upon their discontent. On 22 January 1932, upwards of 5,000 machete-wielding Indios went on a rampage in Western El Salvador, terrorizing, raping and killing coffee growers and their families. President (dictator), General Maximiliano Hernandez squelched the rebellion within a matter of days. The result is remembered as the *matanza*, or massacre. Soldiers detained all registered communists and anyone carrying a machete, dressed in *campesino* costume, or with strong Indian features. On that occasion, between 10,000 and 30,000 men, women, and children were executed indiscriminately and without trials. An approximation of genocide, the 1932 massacre did not wholly exterminate the Indian

and various other resident impediments [65] —"(t)here is a close coordinating relationship between the Ambassador, the . . . agencies, and the combatant commander."[66] In El Salvador, the USMILGP Commander had a small operations staff which oversaw the various US advisers and trainers spread out across the country to work with their Salvadoran functionaries. The advisers and trainers included a ten-man medical team, two dozen national-level advisers, and six three-man Special Forces Operations Planning and Training Teams (OPATTs).

The USMILGP (Figure 1 below), which outside San Salvador consisted mainly of the OPATTs, trained and advised the Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) composed of six infantry brigades, one artillery brigade, a cavalry regiment, and various other administrative and support elements. Each ESAF brigade contained two to four military detachments or battalion-size units. The areas of responsibility for the detachments and brigades correlated with the departmental boundaries of El Salvador's fourteen political

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peoples of El Salvador, but did so to the extent that virtually no Indian culture or identity remained. In the 1980s most of the population are considered *campesinos*, not Indians.

[65] The likely impediments to interagency coordination: 1) Loaded terms (counterinsurgency, guerrillas, enemy, adviser, trainer, civilian, soldier, combatant, noncombatant, "special", PSYOP, Third World), 2) History—Vietnam resulted in bad blood between USAID and the military due to the CORDS program, 3) Organizational and bureaucratic pressures, 4) High-level intervention and congressional oversight, 5) Unstable organizations, amorphous, temporary duty versus permanently stationed meant high rates of actor turnover, 6) War environment required a certain amount of "reacting" to the guerrillas, 7) Language barriers (both English versus Spanish and Military versus USAID), 8) Turf battles; reluctance to share resources (sometimes even illegal), 9) Lack of planning on the part of one (or both), 10, Lack of strategic focus, 11) Distrust, 12) Ignorant as to each organization's mission, strategy, values, 13) Compartmentalization (security issues, selfishness), 14) Career pressures: *intra*-agency dynamics, 15) Competing priorities, 16) Physical separation (too few opportunities to interact, get acquainted, bond, learn), 17) Lack of confidence in one another (no track record), 18) Reluctance to share or relinquish control, 19) Reassignment learning curve determined level of receptivity to innovation, 20) Parochial biases, 21) Lack of a sense of ownership throughout effort, 22) Desire to establish routines, 23) Entrenched procedures due to long war, 24) Easier to do things alone than by committee, 25) Time constraints (real or perceived), 26) Authoritative, order-giving nature of military, 27) Corruption, 28) Technological deficiencies, 29) Social relationships (social distractions), 30) Personalities, 31) The press, 32) Prejudices (feelings of superiority), 33) Different "colors" of money, 34) US law, 35) Salvadoran versus American cultural differences.

divisions. The senior commander in each department was referred to as the departmental commander. Ex-MILGP Commander Colonel John Waghelstein observed: "Due to the ESAF penchant for centralized control, each of the fourteen departmental headquarters dealt directly with the General Staff *(Estado Mayor*)...Operationally, however, the departmental commanders functioned quasi-independently and came to be called 'the warlords.'"[67]

The ESAF tradition of *"tanda"* complicated military-to-military advisory relations. Among ESAF officers, personal ties and political orientation were more important than military competence.[68] Each graduating class, or *"tanda"*, from the Military Academy was bound to lifelong loyalty to one another. In this system, each *tanda* moves up through the ranks together. Officers cover for one another when they step out of line. RAND analyst Benjamin Schwarz wrote: "Adding to the pernicious effects of the *tanda* system is the Salvadoran military's practice of operating not through a clear chain of command but through a complex system of consensus within and between *tandas*. . .The final consequence of the *tanda* system is that officers are not held accountable for their actions, no matter how egregious they may be; human rights abuses therefore go unpunished, military incompetence is tolerated, and corruption runs rampant."[69]

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[66] See Joint Pub 3-07.1, *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID)* (Washington D.C., 26 June 1996), II-12.

[67] Colonel John D. Waghelstein, *El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency* (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: US Army War College, January, 1985), 37.

[68] Richard Haggerty, *El Salvador: A Country Study.* ed Louis Mortimer (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990), 219. **The Officer Corps Dynamics** section of the Area Handbook contains a detailed description of the *tanda* system.

[69] Benjamin C. Schwarz, *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador: The Frustrations of Reform and the Illusions of Nation Building*, (Santa Monica, California: National Defense Research Institute, 1991), 18-19.

Additional Salvadoran security forces further complicated the picture. In addition to the large Army, the National Guard, Treasury Policy, and National Police were employed in internal security roles. According to Waghelstein: "Separate companies of National Guard and Treasury Police were organized and fought as infantry alongside Army units…This system, designed for peacetime conditions with over a score of units and functions reporting directly to the Minister of Defense (MOD) and/or General Staff, was inefficient and unresponsive in a wartime situation."[70]

The US military force of choice in El Salvador was the 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group out of Panama. Special Forces (SF) had earned praise for their work throughout Central America in the early 60s. Their regional awareness, cultural bona fides, personal ties to ESAF, and inherent flexibility made them the most logical pool of trainers. After the 3-man OPATTs brandished their skills, the war became virtually a Special Forces "by-invitation-only" affair. The ESAF respected SF. Consequently, most OPATT officers were hand-picked to ensure they had the maturity and leadership skills required to operate alone in the countryside for months on end. Outside the capital, the OPATTs personified US national will and resolve. They were the best human rights advocates by setting the right examples, day-in and day-out. While "fighting" a small war in El Salvador may have been detrimental to a conventional US officer's career, the Salvadoran conflict gave SF plenty of rein to do the things they had trained for. Given the chance to go back for additional tours, most did. The learning curves became less threatening during subsequent tours of duty as familiarity allowed greater situational awareness and effectiveness. Interagency ties grew stronger. Not all

[70] Waghelstein, *Observations*, 39.

OPATTs were SF. A Marine officer who served from March 1985-July 1986 with the 6th Brigade in Usulután learned the OPATT business the hard way. He said, "The OPATTs were supposed to be training the ESAF. Marines are less suited for that. SF guys are trained to be the trainer."[71] An important component of SF training is the business of cross-cultural communications.[72] To effectively train or advise the Salvadorans, one must appreciate and possess cross-cultural communications skills. People who understand Salvadorans know that the first order of any business meeting is to engage in small-talk and to get to know each other first. To begin a meeting or training session by getting "right to the point" usually results in communicating with an audience that is not ready to listen.[73] Patience was a virtue for OPATT trainers.

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[71] Author's 19 May 1997 telephone interview with LTC (ret) Jeff Cole. Cole had the added pressure of gaining acceptance within the SF organization while learning on the job and trying to win over his ESAF counterparts. He succeeded, returning to El Salvador from May '89-July '91 as the Naval attaché.

[72] "Cross-cultural communication is the process of transmitting facts, ideas or feelings to someone of different customs, religion, language or social organization..." David E. A. Johnson, "Cross-Cultural Communication in Coalition Warfare," *Special Warfare*, (North Carolina: JFK Special Warfare Center and School, July 1993), 9.

[73] SF officers tell many stories about Americans who were unable to deal with Salvadorans because they tried to "cut to the chase" too early. To hear the advisers tell it, it was not unusual for a Salvadoran officer to talk for 30 minutes about families, food, or weather during an important strategy meeting before any "agenda" items were discussed.

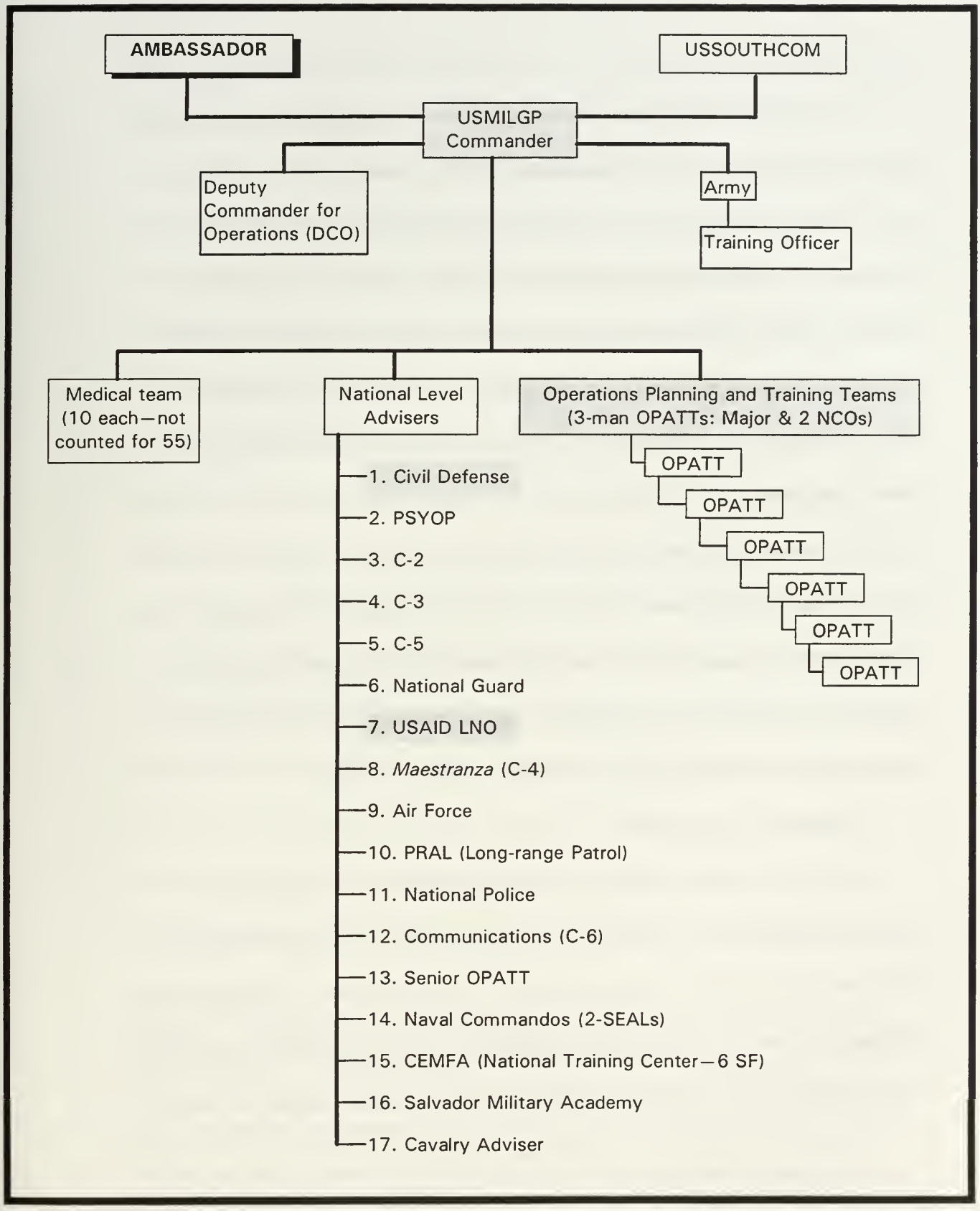

Figure 1. United States Military Group (USMILGP), El Salvador

Since 1961, USAID has responded to the threat of communism by expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of citizens in the developing world.[74] USAID's twofold purpose is grounded in the belief that it is possible to defend US national interests while promoting American values. In accordance with USAID strategies: "USAID conducts its programs under the direction and guidance of the Secretary of State and attaches the highest priority to coordinating its work with the needs and objectives of the Department of State and the U.S. Ambassador and the country team, wherever its missions operate."[75] In El Salvador, the Director of USAID worked through an Associate Mission Director for Operations to oversee and direct the actions of about 200 employees. USAID was divided into a Rural Development Office, a Planning and Programming Office, an Infrastructure and Regional Development Office, and an Economics section. However, USAID offices regularly changed titles, missions, and personnel in response to changes in US foreign policy.

C. OVERALL US POLICY

Since 1980, "the executive branch's justifications for providing military assistance to El Salvador...emphasized two primary objectives: to help El Salvador defend itself against the insurgency and promote Salvadoran military respect for human rights and democracy," a USGAO report explained.[76] First of all, the ESAF needed to be convinced that there was more involved in winning a counterinsurgency effort than

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[74] From a USAID pamphlet found on the internet entitled: "The Challenges for 1996."
[75] See http://www.info.usaid.gov/about/overview.htm, p. 4 of 7.
[76] US General Accounting Office, *El Salvador: Military Assistance Has Helped Counter but Not Overcome the Insurgency*, Report to the Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, GAO/NSIAD-91-166, (USGAO, April 1991), 10.

simply killing guerrillas. They needed to have a campaign plan at least (a National Plan at best) and they needed to stop abusing the prize that could ensure their eventual success—the Salvadoran people. The Salvadoran military had long constituted a key societal ill. Fifty years of military rule in support of the elite oligarchy resulted in a corrupt, disengaged, repressive, abusive, and otherwise bad institution.[77] The extent of civil-military conspiracy, corruption, ineptitude and other maladies which caused the civil war, then hindered its timely resolution, is subject to debate.[78] Nevertheless, most people mistrusted the regime (government and military officials) because they represented an unaccountable, sinister military institution; the omnipotence of oligarchic domination; and repeated instances of underhanded democratic processes.

Prior to 1983 "The Plan" consisted of conducting guerrilla sweeps with conventionally-oriented, large, multi-battalion operations. The plan was to use military power to wear down and defeat the enemy. The USMILGP recognized the need for a national plan along the lines of an internal defense and development (IDAD) program,[79] but they had their hands full with crisis management. They needed help. US counterinsurgency doctrine dictated reforms and interagency initiatives. Wary of lessons-learned in Vietnam about the escalatory tendencies of US "intervention",

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[77] There are differing degrees of civil-military distrust in conflict throughout Salvadoran history, but government and military institutions were indisputably bad. Regarding the allegations of *corruption,* it is important that we realize "corrupt" is defined by Salvadoran society. What Americans may consider egregious corruption may be accepted by Salvadoran society and considered "just the way things work."

[78] Read Martin Diskin's and Kenneth Sharpe's report: *"The Impact of U.S. Policy in El Salvador, 1979-1985".* Policy Papers in International Affairs, Number 27, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1986, pp. 67. for a conspiratorial view of Salvadoran politics and ineptitude.

[79] Per Joint Pub 3-07.1, Appendix C, the "IDAD strategy is the full range of measures taken by a (host) nation to promote its growth and protect itself from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency." The IDAD strategy is developed by the host nation and "should integrate military and civilian programs into a coherent, comprehensive effort." The IDAD program blends four interdependent functions (balanced development, security, neutralization, and mobilization) into an effort to prevent or counter internal

American policy makers were careful not to commit US forces on a large scale.[80] It was decided that US intervention would be in the limited, and sometimes conditional, form of advisors, training, equipment, and monetary aid.[81] The waging of warfare would be left to the Salvadorans.[82]

At the direction of the Joint Chiefs, General Wallace Nutting[83] sent Brigadier General Fred Woerner[84] with a team to survey the Salvadoran military and produce a report outlining a strategy and force structure required to combat the insurgency.[85] His findings were known as the Woerner Report and became the starting point for developing a campaign—or national plan. The US had its first strategic document saying what needed to be done. The hard part was still to come. General Nutting lamented, "We then had to come to grips with the force development and actions that Woerner recommended, along with the doctrine and all the functional capabilities, and sew all the things together in terms of political-military objectives in El Salvador."[86] According to Bacevich: "The Woerner Report had aimed to create an army that could

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threats. Ideally, the US FID effort supports the host nation's IDAD program. That is hard to do when there is no plan or program.

[80] A 55-man limit was set to prevent "gringoizing" the war. This would epitomize the FID concept of doing more with less. For a discussion of the 55-man limit, see A.J. Bacevich, et al, *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador* (Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Washington, D.C., 1988), 5, 22.

[81] While some may argue that many of the "conditional restrictions" were in fact, arbitrary, most will admit that a limited US role was a necessary prerequisite for success.

[82] Restricting US military advisors from combat operations was easier said than done and may have contributed to the extensive human rights atrocities.

[83] Commander-in-Chief, USSOUTHCOM, 1979-1983.

[84] Then Brigadier General, 193rd Brigade Commander, later General Fred Woerner, CINCUSOUTHCOM, 1987-1989.

[85] Per Waghelstein's 1985 Study Project, 36, the survey of ESAF was conducted from 12 Sep-8 Nov 1981.

[86] Maxwell G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, preface by Ambassador Edwin G. Corr (Washington, D.C., National Defense University Press, 1988), 222. General Nutting went on to say, "I don't know whether it was suspicion or reluctance (for whatever reason) on the part of the U.S. Embassy to allow the military to undertake that effort. When we finally got the Ambassador's

kill guerrillas; the National Campaign Plan (NCP) was to win."[87] One can see a different purpose statement emerging. An acrimonious conversation between General Nutting[88] and Ambassador Deane Hinton[89] clearly makes the point that there was high-level confusion about the purported focus of US intervention. General Nutting asked, "Damn it, Mr. Ambassador, what the hell do you think we're here for?" To which Ambassador Hinton replied, "I'm here to hold on." Then, General Nutting brought to light the philosophical differences by saying, "I've been told that we're here to win."[90]

1. *Operación Bienestar*—The First Plan

An argument can be made that a coherent national plan never really existed throughout the war.[91] Since no plan existed before the Woerner report, it is hard to ascertain unity of effort in the beginning of the war. This section reviews the evolution of the National Plan—by whatever name—and highlights the parts requiring interagency dealings. The first glimpse of a pacification campaign plan came with *Operación Bienestar* (or Operation Wellbeing), a Salvadoran military staff college graduation exercise conducted in March, 1983 .[92] *Operación Bienestar* was the earliest three-year interagency plan developed by civilian and military advisers who worked closely to emphasize and coordinate the nonmilitary aspects of the campaign.[93] For the first time,

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concurrence to proceed, he would not allow USSOUTHCOM to participate, and it had to be done by the MILGP."

[87] Bacevich, 21.

[88] General Wallace H. Nutting was Commander-in-Chief, US Southern Command from 1979-1983.

[89] Ambassador Deane Hinton was the US Ambassador to El Salvador from 1982-1983.

[90] Manwaring and Prisk, 239-240.

[91] I disagree—it seems that the NCP existed in one form or another from 1983 on. Whether the plan was understood and followed is another issue altogether.

[92] Another name for this plan was *"Maquilishuat"*.

[93] Waghelstein specifically mentions LTC Stevens, the OPATT Commander, and Mr. Leo Rueles from USAID. They worked with Col Golcher, the Task Force Commander, and Col Amaya, Chief of CONARA.

the counterinsurgency effort was guided by a Salvadoran campaign plan. It began with San Vicente in June, 1983. The military portion was conducted by the newly formed light *"Cazador"* (Hunter) , Immediate Reaction (IR) Battalions. They swept out the guerrillas, then provided security for the civilian developmental efforts. The plan to provide security called for training up the departmental staff and troops and creating Civil Defense (CD) forces to provide security after the IR Battalions moved on to sweep the next areas of priority in Usulután. According to Waghelstein: "Although the Department was not totally cleared when this shift occurred in early 1984, many of the guerrilla bases were destroyed and most of the guerrilla forces had moved out of the area."[94] Creating and training effective CD units emerged as a weak link. Funding for the CD units became a problem because CD fell beyond the purview for US security assistance funds.[95]

Operación Bienestar's four priorities were: (1) Agrarian reform, (2) Increased employment, (3) Restoration of vital services, and (4) Humanitarian assistance.[96] It focused narrowly on the departments of San Vicente and Usulután and consisted of four phases: Planning, Offensive, Development, and Consolidation.[97] Though the initial implementation would move sequentially through each of the four phases, it was understood that the earlier phases would need to be re-accomplished as guerrillas moved back into the areas. This would happen when the focus shifted to a neighboring department into which the guerrillas fled from San Vicente or Usulután.

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[94] Waghelstein, *Observations*, 54.
[95] Ibid, 55.
[96] Ibid, 52.
[97] Ibid, 53.

The thrust of the three-year San Vicente plan targeted 13 *municipios* (communities) and covered a range of developmental projects. According to Michael McClintock: "The initial objective was to clear the guerrillas from the area and so halt the disruption of cotton and sugar production."[98] Waghelstein added: ". . . agricultural development and production, infrastructure development, local administration, small and medium entrepreneurial activities, credit for investment, and adult and youth education. Specific progress in San Vicente included the reopening of 41 schools, 7 cooperative farms, and 11 clinics; 30 communities benefited from the vaccination program; and over 1000 families left the displaced persons camps and returned to their homes."[99] When the IR Battalions moved on to Usulután, some guerrillas did return and consequently several USAID projects were not finished until security could be restored.

Planning, the first phase of the operation, required detailed interagency planning involving the Ministries of Health, Public Works, Agriculture, Planning and Education, and the ESAF. The Country Team helped the Government of El Salvador (GOES) and ESAF come up with various courses of action. This approach was proactive and methodically concentrated on areas of national priority. No longer was the plan to be everywhere and do everything for everybody. It made the point that the guerrillas had to be systematically denied their pool of potential recruits—the populace.

The second phase, Offensive, changed the method of tactical operations. IR Battalions (the forces with the best training and soldiering skills) were concentrated in

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[98] Michael McClintock, *The American Connection: Volume 1, State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador* (London, United Kingdom: Zed Books, LTD, 1985), 321.
[99] Waghelstein, *Observations*, 54.

key areas while holding actions took place elsewhere in the country. This tactical concentration overwhelmed and repelled the guerrillas from those areas. Additionally, CD units were formed as a force multiplier.[100] CD units were trained, armed with old weapons,[101] and provided a radio to call back to the departmental brigade for help. Unpaid villagers became a paramilitary force, guarding their own villages. Their families supported them by keeping their eyes and ears open to detect guerrillas in the area.

The third phase, Development, reestablished villages and encouraged the people who had earlier fled for their lives to move back. "Big Bang" Civic Actions were conducted. These were one-day carnival type events featuring: clowns, a Mariachi Band, free USAID staples, barbers, doctors, dentists, speeches, and PSYOP materials. The message was that the village would be safe and there would be local government protection and services. Infrastructure improvements were made, wells drilled, schools built, and an amnesty program set up to accommodate insurgent defectors.

In the final phase, Consolidation, long-term sustainment became an issue. Once the guerrillas were cleared out, the work was not finished. Repeated sweeps, CD recruitment and training, and economic aid had to continue. Institution building and reforms were necessary to prevent reoccurrence. The press criticized the plan because the guerrillas would naturally flow back and forth between the different departments to

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[100] The plan for the CD units was to hopefully attain a 10:1 force ratio over the guerrillas.

[101] The ESAF worried that the rag-tag CD units would be easily overrun. They argued that the CD weapons would prove to be nothing more than supplying the guerrillas with weapons caches. Consequently, the weapons were limited to 50 (at each site) and their calibers did not match those used by the guerrillas (.30 caliber M-2 carbines versus the insurgents' predominant 5.56 and 7.62 calibers). The lure to CD weaponry would be minimal.

avoid the sweeps, and money infusions into the communities were slow. Both problems could be fixed.

The National Plan was bureaucratically administered through the National Commission for Reconstruction (CONARA). Waghelstein detailed the relationship between CONARA and its subordinate agencies: "In order to implement the Plan, CONARA equivalents had to be energized at the Departmental (CODERA), Municipal (COMURA) and Canton (COCARA) levels. As with CONARA, these local organizations contained military, agrarian, health and educational personnel as well as local elected officials."[102] Before long, complaints began claiming that the bureaucratic friction was extensive and corrupt CONARA officials hurt the process.

2. The 1984 Kissinger Commission Report

In December 1983, President Reagan outlined four principles of American strategy in El Salvador. He spoke of: "(1) democracy—supporting democracy, reform, and freedom against dictators of both the left and right; (2) development—promoting economic recovery, social growth, and equality; (3) dialogue—fostering a 'dialogue of democracy' among competing factions in El Salvador as well as negotiations among Central American nations; and (4) defense—providing 'a security against those who use violence against democratization, development, and diplomacy.'"[103] These "4 D's" described how America felt about El Salvador. Reagan's speech was soon followed by the most thorough and enduring policy statement about El Salvador, commonly known as the Kissinger Commission report. In January, 1984, The National Bipartisan Commission on Central America issued its report. The Kissinger Commission report

marked the first time that the threat of an insurgency in the Third World was given the status of national policy and it advocated the exacting application of counterinsurgency principles.[104] Besides discussing the military means for defeating the guerrillas, it "emphasized the political and economic basis of the war and advocated a strategy that relied heavily on political, social, and economic development as the key to defeating El Salvador's insurgency," said Schwarz.[105]

Scholars have categorized the Salvadoran revolution as foremost a "class war." About 2 percent of the Salvadoran elite owned 60 percent of El Salvador's productive land in 1981, controlled production, and accounted for one-third of the national income.[106] Among the elite there were ancestral divisions. The oldest, most prestigious families were associated with the colonial founding fathers who first exported agriculture. The earliest two-class society pitted the oligarchic "family of fourteen" against the indigenous peasants. The elite, owing to their Spanish breeding, long considered the peasants unworthy of citizenship.[107] The ruling elite controlled the elections, made few real concessions, and used the security forces and army to abuse the outliers. Detailing the political unrest, Tommie Sue Montgomery wrote: "Between December 1932 and November 1979 El Salvador was convulsed six times by the cycle of consolidation of power by conservatives, growing dissent and repression, a coup d'état by a progressive faction within the army, the reemergence of the conservatives,

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[102] Waghelstein, *Observations*, 53-54.
[103] Schwarz, 10.
[104] Ibid, 11.
[105] Ibid, 11.
[106] Haggerty, 60.

and their assumption of control of the government."[108] The oligarchy ensured that "democratic" elections produced outcomes that met with their approval. In spite of high voter turnouts, there were repeated instances of ballot-box stuffing. The peasants were well aware of the democratic facade, but desperately clung to the belief that elected officials like Jose Napoleon Duarte and various popular organizations were their best hope for legal reforms.[109] Some toothless reforms were affected and many well-educated, competent, and honest people were installed in the government. Before long however, political reality soon set in and many naïve, idealistic individuals resigned in disgust.

El Salvador is a poor country. It has long endured a boom—then bust—economy, primarily because it depended upon single crops.[110] In 1882, communal lands were abolished by decree, the indigenous peoples were evicted, and popular revolts ensued. The richest, coffee-growing lands fell into the hands of the "Fourteen Families." The oligarchy controlled the lands; the landless worked the lands; and the economy ebbed and flowed in response to the world economy. Relating economics to politics, Hugh Byrne said: "Ownership of land and production of export crops were the core of capital accumulation, the jumping-off point for expansion into other sectors of

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[107] Enrique A. Baloyra, *El Salvador in Transition* (The University of NC Press, Chapel Hill & London, 1982) 22. Baloyra describes the dealings of "the Family of Fourteen," noting that there are actually more than 14 families that make up the ruling Oligarchy.

[108] Tommie Sue Montgomery, *Revolution in El Salvador: Origins and Evolution,* int. Roman Mayorga Quiroz (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1982), 57.

[109] Mahmood Monshipouri, *Democratization, Liberalization & Human Rights in the Third World* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, London, 1995), 137. Duarte was a career politician.

[110] Montgomery, *Revolution*, 1982, 34. Author describes a cycle which played itself out, over and over: 1) Dramatic discovery of a new crop, 2) Rapid development of the new crop, 3) period of great prosperity from the export of the crop, 4) dramatic decline or stagnation, 5) economic depression during which a frantic search for a replacement crop ensued, 6) discovery of a new crop and the beginning of another cycle.

the economy, and the basis for control over El Salvador's political system."[111] No land, no money. No land, no political power.

The objectives detailed in the Kissinger Commission report became the basis for assessing progress and measuring the success of America's counterinsurgency policy in El Salvador. Schwarz wrote: "The commission argued that no contradiction existed between the security interests of a great power and the generous motives of a democracy; the two were indeed connected."[112] The linking mechanism was to be "conditionality". Here is where US economic and military aid was tied to reformatory conditions, including human rights, judicial reforms, elections, rule of law, and prosecution of past offenders.

3. *Unidos Para Reconstuir* (UPR)

UPR was a civic-action program started in late 1985 in order to remedy inefficiencies and corruption of CONARA. UPR, the new mechanism for supervising The National Plan, had the same four phases that were demonstrated in 1983, during *Operación Bienestar*, except now the operation was administered by the ESAF. It was resisted by the Salvadoran government precisely because it was dominated by the military.[113] UPR was implemented in all fourteen departments with the departmental commanders standing to benefit, instead of CONARA. Civilians resisted UPR because they perceived it as another way for the ESAF to rein over the countryside and control the people. Corruption, real or perceived, hindered the means of administering The

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[111] Hugh Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War: A Study of Revolution* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 21.
[112] Schwarz, 11-12.
[113] Ibid, 52. Here, Schwarz claims that USAID sided with Duarte, the President, and refused to funnel their money through the ESAF in support of UPR.

National Plan. Some argue that the departmental commanders took over the program so they could be the benefactors of the financial skimming, vice CONARA. "Skimming" denotes corruption in the eyes of most Americans, but it has long been a necessity and an accepted way of life in El Salvador. For years, the absence of accountable and effective institutions and a negligible tax base required the departmental commanders to fund their operations through creative and controversial means. The oligarchy paid for protection; military budgets were based upon numbers of soldiers, so force numbers were padded, and seldom accounted for deceased soldiers; and military equipment or supplies were sold on the black market. Corruption was bound to pervade in any program conducted in El Salvador, by Salvadorans. For the US, it was a part of Salvadoran culture—and a part of the cost of doing business through surrogate agencies. The real issue was one of Salvadoran civil-military relations, but the various US agencies were caught in the middle. The campaign plan had merit, however the flawed institutions and civil-military power struggles began to pull it apart. Civil-military unity of effort seemed like an elusive and improbable aspiration. Schwarz wrote: "The Duarte government resisted UPR precisely because the military dominated it. The Christian Democrats regarded the plan as a thinly veiled effort on the armed forces' part to eclipse civilian leadership in general and the especially tenuous civilian control over rural areas in particular."[114]

The USMILGP supported UPR just as it had *Operación Bienestar* and USAID did allocate additional funds for projects in UPR priority areas. Still and all, a fundamental difference of purpose emerges with respect to the two US agencies. The

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[114] Ibid, 52.

USMILGP, by "charter" was required to take sides with the Salvadoran government and military against the guerrillas. USAID officials did not significantly change their focus because the military was now directing the campaign plan versus CONARA. The USAID perspective stayed focused on aiding Salvadorans, regardless of political orientation. Though politics were not part of the calculus, distinguishing between "military" versus "civilian" projects was important. USAID funds, by congressional mandate, could not be used for military purposes. "In organizational terms, this means that in an insurgency-wracked country where the military represents the closest thing to an effective institution, . . . AID is expected to carry on as if neither the war nor the military existed," wrote A.J. Bacevich.[115] Sometimes they would be able to provide more or less aid to areas in accordance with UPR priorities, but that was not their imperative. Security for USAID contractors was a concern—but if they thought they could work in an area considered "contested" or worse, "guerrilla held", they would. Their focus was on economic, social, and grass-roots political development. Military development or enhancement was not their purpose for being, in fact US law prevented USAID funds from being spent that way.[116]

The gray areas of the campaign plan began to emerge. Could USAID funds be used to ensure protection of bridges, power plants, telephone and power poles, water treatment facilities, railroads, roads, telephone switching facilities, and other vital components of Salvadoran infrastructure? As the guerrillas targeted the economic

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[115] Bacevich, 12. Bacevich goes on to say, "All of this philosophizing about popular support and praise for civic action as a counterinsurgent tactic counts for little when the Congress enjoins American officials fighting a small war from using the local military to help implement U.S. development programs...And whatever the risks of using the military, failure to find some answer to the development puzzle spells almost certain doom for the war effort."

infrastructure in 1985, USAID found themselves funding rebuilds for many of the same facilities. Without some collaboration with the military on means for improved security, USAID infrastructure development seemed futile. They needed help and the OPATT advisers had ideas about how to fortify the most critical bridges, power plants, and switching facilities. Telephone and power poles were too hard to protect.[117] Ideas for using snipers to protect the lines were obviously too manpower intensive for widespread application. But concertina wire, security perimeters, and fences could be funded by USAID. It made sense to protect the infrastructure for the sake of all Salvadorans. This was an momentous display of mutual interagency support.

In early 1986 the responsibility for training was turned over to the ESAF. This allowed the OPATT advisers to concentrate on other things. As they traveled around their departments, often the only American presence in areas outside San Salvador, they became the "go-to" guys. Security considerations and restricted means of mobility generally prevented USAID from checking on their projects that relied upon Salvadoran contractors. When the municipal mayors asked about projects in their villages, CD units lacked equipment, or the villagers wanted news about what was happening elsewhere—they asked the SF adviser. He would, in turn, make phone calls or radio back to the MILGP, file reports, or bring these issues up at monthly OPATT meetings in San Salvador. Following up was difficult though, because OPATT advisers mostly lived and worked outside the capital.

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[116] 22 US Code §2346 ©, 1982 edition.

[117] This is not wholly true. LTC (ret) Bob Watson, 1st Brigade OPATT from May 1986-July 1987, calculated the cost of replacing frequently sabotaged power poles along a key North-South road in his area and determined it was more cost effective (based on his calculated savings ratio of $4 to $1) to use a

Each organization had its own way of slicing up El Salvador. USAID divided the country into three zones: West, Central, and East. The OPATT concept was based on six zones, each ideally allocated a 3-man trainer team.[118] Logically, the Salvadorans divided the country into 14 zones, or departments. This meant OPATTs were responsible for up to three different departments, and the USAID worker even more. The NCP emphasized different things in different areas. The guerrilla-free areas in the west were able to work out the finer points of CD doctrine and infrastructure, while other areas with frequent guerrilla actions lacked a mayor, CD recruits, or even a town well. Another unexpected glitch in the NCP arose when the villagers who had fled from the guerrillas to the cities resisted resettlement once the areas were reclaimed from the FMLN. Plots of land, a well, and a house awaited them in the countryside but after they became accustomed to urban conveniences, they did not want to leave. Often *campesinos* would ride a bus from their city shantytowns to the land they cultivated during the day, only to return each evening to the city. This undermined the concept of fostering ownership and commitment to local government throughout the country. Sometimes USAID representatives would catch rides out to project areas in the military helicopters. On the occasions when the USAID representative and military action officers were able to walk around the villages and check on their respective projects together, orchestrating the implementation of the campaign plan (as it was intended) became much easier. Coordination degraded when such civil-military interaction

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200-man Battalion to guard the power lines. When the battalion guarded the lines, the rate of pole destruction dropped by 50% the first month, then even more infrequently over the following months.

[118] "Ideally" because sometimes there were not enough trainers to cover all six military zones. The 55-man limit, small pool of advisers, sickness, rotations, or other competing priorities—sometimes shorted the planned OPATT configuration.

occurred less often. Transportation, competing priorities, and security considerations kept each component from routinely working together.

4. *Municipos en Acción* (MEA)

In the latter part of 1986, during one of the weekly meetings of the National Plan Task Force, a bold idea was presented for how to best infuse USAID money into the needy communities without having to contend with divisive issues of corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, or civil-military power plays. "Why don't we just give the money to the mayors?" somebody asked. The rudimentary program that emerged was municipalities in action, or MEA. No longer would USAID fund and build projects that *they* believed benefited the villagers, whether it be a well, road, or schoolhouse—the people would decide.[119] The idea behind MEA was that each mayor held an open town meeting (*cabildos abiertos*) during which the people could nominate and vote for projects they wanted. Sometimes it was a well, or a school; other times, a wall around the graveyard, a church, public wash area, or any other public utility. If the project was approved (and most were) then the money was provided directly to the mayor so he could locally contract the required services. Usually the job went to a local "contractor" known to the villagers. This was an important concept since El Salvador lacked a viable justice system whereby a town could sue a delinquent or negligent contractor. A reputable local-hire ensured more-reliable services rendered.[120] When USAID had previously let out contracts, but were unable to actively oversee them, projects

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[119] USAID did still prioritize areas in accordance with the desires of CONARA, but CONARA was cut out of the bureaucratic loop.

[120] In a 30 May 1997 telephone interview, Debbie Kennedy, USAID Project Development Officer from '86-'91, explained why "nepotism is not viewed as a bad thing in El Salvador." If the justice system does not work, then it makes sense to do business with people you know.

repeatedly were paid for, but not completed. Since the villagers voted for their MEA projects, they felt ownership, and they remained involved. This helped foster democracy, efficiency, and better institutions at the local levels. The idea was simple, but not without risks. Cash—$10-15,000, or more—was handed directly to mayors who possessed little education,[121] nor did their towns have a bank. It was not uncommon for the mayor to literally keep the money under his mattress until it was time to pay the workers. In spite of the odds, MEA suffered from very little fraud.[122] It also allowed USAID to sidestep the "skim takers".[123] In the earliest trials of MEA, the projects were massaged by administrators in a deliberate effort to guide each village to "request" five components: [124] a school, government building, electricity, a telephone, and improve roads.[125] Realizing that the guerrillas would try to undermine the MEA program, the first projects coincided with an established CD site. USAID taught the mayors how to conduct town meetings and gave classes in various aspects of effective governance. Actors were hired to portray an environment in which the locals could make inputs and effect meaningful changes.[126] By the time the peace treaty was signed in 1992, all but 19 of the 262 municipalities had taken part in the MEA program. Why was MEA so

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[121] During a 30 May 1997 telephone interview with Tom Hawk, the USAID MEA project leader, he estimated that the average mayor in 1986 possessed only a 3rd grade education, whereas today, due to more qualified people running for mayor, the average educational level has risen to the 11th grade.
[122] USAID boasts a record of never having more than 1% of MEA funds considered suspect.
[123] Based on 16 June 1997 telephone interview with LTC (ret) Bob Watson, 1st Brigade OPATT, May '86-Jul '87. He said MEA was intended "to stovepipe the money machine and eliminate the skim takers." It did.
[124] Those charged with infrastructure improvements felt all were needed to install and sustain local governance. 16 June 1997 telephone interview with LTC (ret) Bob Watson, 1st Brigade OPATT, May '86-Jul '87.
[125] Based on16 June 1997 Watson interview: MEA was first implemented in his area of responsibility, infusing $65,000 directly into the local community. LTC Watson capitalized on his personal ties with the Salvadoran governor, DM5 brigade, USAID's Tom Hawk, and others to make sure MEA worked.
[126] Based on 2 May 1997 telephone interview with LTC Pagan, USAID SF LNO, Jan '89-Jun'89.

successful? USAID's Tom Hawk thinks it is "because all the projects were identified, selected, and implemented by the people."[127]

MEA exemplified interagency mutual support. It burbled up from the working levels and continues today. It is "widely considered the most effective civic action program implemented in El Salvador," says Schwarz.[128] The MILGP played a supporting role to the MEA initiative, advising USAID about what was happening across the country and keeping ESAF at bay as their control was gradually undermined. Furthermore, several projects that fell below the USAID funds cutoff line were funded by the military civic action program. All the military-funded projects came from an MEA list which considered the UPR and CONARA priorities. From USAID's perspective, MEA was the "quiet revolution."[129]

Not everyone is (or was) as enamored with MEA as USAID, however. Benjamin Schwarz notes:

> There are, however, strict limits to MEA's success. Since the program is conceived and financed by the United States, and since its orientation is specifically local, it establishes little loyalty toward the government and Armed Forces of El Salvador. Furthermore, as an exhaustive evaluation of pacification programs in El Salvador concluded, even if the Salvadoran government manages to present a new face to its population through an effective civic action program, it will not be easy to overcome the distrust and cynicism that is the legacy of centuries of neglect and oppression.

The FMLN also had a hard time sabotaging the MEA program or its projects. They tried, in the beginning, in the department of Chalatenango, but the villagers protected their projects with a vengeance. Six months later, by early 1987, the guerrillas

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[127] Author's telephone interview with Tom Hawk, USAID El Salvador, 3 June, 1997.
[128] Schwarz, 53.

made a deliberate effort to leave MEA projects alone. In fact, the FMLN became some of USAID's best "auditors", as they, too, watched the mayors and contractors. The guerrillas soon realized that they were not going to convert the townspeople to support their cause by destroying the projects they voted for and so vehemently supported.

Besides MEA, the civic action projects were still an important component of the national plan. About four times a week, the military would descend upon a village and make a concerted effort to win "hearts and minds". The events were well-advertised and very popular. People walked for miles to attend Civic Action (CA) events. Guerrillas buried their rifles and walked into town to take advantage of handouts too. The one or two-day events seemed like carnivals, usually featuring clowns, a mariachi band and skimpily clad dancers. USAID provided the foodstuffs—usually cooking oil, four, rice, and other staples. Used clothes and toys were handed out. Meanwhile, the ESAF officers and the mayor made speeches; barbers gave haircuts, a dentist pulled teeth and passed out toothbrushes; and doctors saw patients and administered inoculations. As part of the effort to win over the villagers, PSYOP materials were passed out. These included tee-shirts, coloring books, pamphlets, and other preprinted materials. To Americans these events seemed like a flash in the pan, so obviously superficial, but there was more happening than merely making people feel good.[130]

Civic Actions were true interagency ventures. The military provided the helicopters and trucks. USAID provided the edibles and healthcare. Humanitarian organizations contributed donated materials from the international community. And

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[129] Author's telephone interview with Tom Hawk, USAID El Salvador, 3 June, 1997.

amidst all the commotion, people talked to each other (exchanged information) and national focus, for a time, was diverted outside the capital.[131] The CA events also represented an opportunity to publicly recognize CD school graduates and check up on development projects. The agencies, like it or not, compromised and worked together.[132]

D. INTERAGENCY RESULTS

The National Plan had evolved; from *Operación Bienestar* to UPR, and then to MEA. When the Salvadoran government's top-down bureaucracy failed, a bottom-up local government mechanism emerged and prevailed. Instead of expecting the national campaign plan to go everywhere and be everything—to everybody, guerrilla contested areas were systematically targeted. Infrastructure Development, PSYOP, CD, and CA were all key components of the larger National Plan that USAID and the USMILGP managed to contribute to in their mutually supportive roles. Neither organization could fulfill its objectives without deliberate assistance from the other.

In 1984, the guerrillas reached their greatest strength, numbering nearly 13,000 full-time armed combatants. By 1990, their strength had been cut to half that number. The ESAF, on the other hand, grew from 11,000 in the early 1980's to 56,000

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[130] "Nevertheless, many analysts argue that the hearts-and-minds campaigns in El Salvador are better designed to manipulate people's behavior than to change fundamentally the miserable conditions that perpetuate the war." Schwarz, 55.

[131] There were formal and informal intelligence gatherers present to assess village sympathies and watch for guerrillas.

[132] Per a 2 June 1997 telephone interview with Col Dennis Walko, Civic Action coordinator in El Salvador from July '87-June '88: The CA projects typically took place near a schoolhouse. During one event, Col Walko noticed that the new school had no desks. When he asked USAID, they said they had 40,000 school desks in a warehouse, but no way to haul them into the conflictive area. Walko said the military would truck the desks out to the school, and ran the paper trail to get them released. Bureaucratic friction ensued until the Ambassador weighed in while the military drove out to the warehouse to pick up the desks.

(including security forces) by 1990. By 1990, the US had provided over $1.2 billion in military assistance and $3 billion in economic aid.[133] US advisors worked with the Salvadoran forces to determine the spending priorities and acquire the military equipment, spare parts, training, and equipment they required to better prosecute the war. Encouraging the ESAF to respect and protect human rights was made harder because their force grew so rapidly and consisted mostly of young, inexperienced 2-year conscripts. Assessments differ on progress made in the human rights arena,[134] partly due to the sporadic reports and deceptive practices of fixing blame, but by the latter phase of the war the Salvadoran people began to side with the Salvadoran military.[135] Though the US could only promote respect for human rights through indirect and limited means, progress was made. The OPATT trainers shadowed their ESAF counterparts, setting the example for internationally recognized human rights standards and democratic principles. To exert pressure on the Salvadoran government, the US periodically "placed restrictions and conditions on its aid, linking the continued provision of assistance with progress and actions in specific human rights cases," noted

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[133] United States Government Accounting Office (USGAO), *El Salvador: Military Assistance Has Helped Counter but Not Overcome the Insurgency*, Report to the Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, GAO/NSIAD-91-166, (USGAO, April 1991), 9. The GAO report breaks out the military assistance into $996 million in Foreign Military Financing funds and $24 million for the IMET program.

[134] A more shocking perspective exists in the 1991 book published by America's Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror: Human Rights since the Assassination of Archbishop Romero.*

[135] A March 1990 Gallup opinion poll found that few Salvadorans supported the FMLN. 1991 GAO Report for Senator Kennedy: "The poll was designed by the U.S. Information Agency, Office of Research and conducted by a Gallup affiliate located in Costa Rica. A nationally representative sample of 1,274 Salvadorans aged 18 and older who lived in 12 regional departments (out of 14) was interviewed in person.", 16. "The poll found that 70 percent of the respondents had an unfavorable opinion of the FMLN, and only 11 percent had a favorable opinion. Conversely, 72 percent of those polled had a favorable opinion of the government forces. Furthermore, 55 percent believed the FMLN had most abused the Salvadoran people and had less respect for human rights than the government forces." With that said, keep in mind the probable margin for error attributable to fear of retribution for answering the poll "incorrectly".

the USGAO.[136] As one experienced OPATT adviser observed: "By the fact that we were in the brigades, we became the conscience of the Salvadoran army. Toward the end of the war, Salvadoran officers were saying things about human rights that you would never have heard at the beginning of the war. They created a human-rights office in the military to investigate, internally, human-rights abuses and allegations. They had really come a long way."[137]

On May 6, 1984, Christian Democratic leader Jose Napoleon Duarte overcame a tradition of 52 years of military rule to become the first freely-elected president of El Salvador. That event represented a significant first step in El Salvador's democratic evolution. Since 1982, the Salvadoran military provided security for elections which international observers described as "free and fair."[138]

Civil Defense (CD) proved to be inadequate for two reasons: (1) The departmental forces often failed to rescue CD units when they came under fire and radioed for help, and (2) The ESAF lacked funds and trainers required to improve CD. These became the themes for ongoing challenges: how to infuse funds directly into the communities to directly support the NCP, and how to compel the departmental forces to support the CD units. CD was an important component of the plan to foster feelings of ownership and responsibility among villagers, and a way of life worth protecting. Despite these shortcomings, the situation in San Vicente had improved. Some would argue that if the people had in fact felt renewed ownership due to the MEA program,

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[136] USGAO Kennedy Report, 26.
[137] LTC Frank Pedrozo in an interview by *Special Warfare* magazine, late 1993 or early 1994.
[138] USGAO Kennedy Report, 30-31. "A previous commander of the U.S. Military Group in El Salvador cited the professional and non-partisan conduct of the military at the March 1988 national elections as an example of the improved cooperation between the government and the armed forces."

then the CD program would have also noticeably turned around.[139] But CD did not markedly improve after MEA was introduced. The Salvadoran reluctance to build and support a viable CD program was made obvious in that irresponsible, unmotivated soldiers were often appointed as the ESAF Brigade counterpart. CD supplies (boots, rifles, ammunition clips) were hoarded in warehouses in anticipation of the day when the US would pull out and leave the Salvadorans to fend for themselves.[140] The head of each village CD unit was usually a former ESAF NCO who had suffered a disability that barred him from active duty. He and a few other recruits would man the CD office and patrol the village. At night, volunteer farmers took over by shifts. CD volunteers were unpaid and found themselves with a lot of time on their hands. Many took to extorting protection money from the villagers, others became the town drunks, but some stood up to the guerrillas as they were trained to do. CD units were occasionally overrun, weapons taken, and the defenders were killed. In an attempt to make amends to the families of the deceased CD volunteer(s), a small insurance policy was provided.[141] To further complicate matters, some villagers accused corrupt Brigade commanders of skimming off the $1000 insurance settlements instead of providing it to the suffering families. Sometimes if the CD unit did its job and called for help, and the Brigade

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[139] Schwarz, 53. "Any change in attitude that civic action engenders will develop very slowly. The failure so far (1991) to change the population's attitude is reflected in its continued reluctance to form the civil defense units, which, as one former American military advisor asserts, is 'the one solution that can turn the reconstruction program around and save the country.'" He gives three main reasons for the failure of CD: 1) Populace still regarded CD as means of repression versus protection, 2) Salvadoran military didn't support it, and 3) A catch-22 existed in that if the people would have be willing to form CD units, they would need to be willing to support the government over the FMLN—therefore the end of the war would have already been reached (55).

[140] LTC (ret) Jeff Cole, 6th Brigade OPATT, discovered a warehouse full of CD equipment while the CD units were left wanting. The ESAF CD officer knew the equipment was there.

[141] The CIA provided a pot of money which allowed $1000 death benefit; payable to the family of the CD recruit in the event of his death in the performance of his duty.

responded, the guerrillas would be waiting and ambushed them as they drove down the lone road to the village.[142] Helicopters became the preferred mode of response, but helicopters were usually in demand elsewhere. In case the helicopters might be able to respond, the FMLN prepared themselves for that eventuality. Army Major Ed Reeder explained: "The overwhelming majority of attacks on CD units happened during times of limited visibility."[143]

In the summer of 1987, the Deputy MILGP Commander, LTC Jim Bacille, convinced the MILGP Commander, Col John Ellerson; USAID Director, Robin Gomez; and Ambassador Edwin Corr, that a Special Forces (SF) liaison officer (LNO) should be assigned to USAID.[144] The duties of the SF LNO to USAID centered on improving interagency coordination.[145] The LNO was assigned to the USAID office which handled the MEA program. Personalities clicked, relationships developed, and information was shared. The LNO helped with logistics, threat assessment in areas of interest, and worked through the OPATTs to provide their USAID counterparts with better access to military officials. Working relationships improved between USAID and the MILGP. USAID also gained inroads to the ESAF departmental commanders. Getting access to the departmental commanders was an important prerequisite for operating in the rural areas. The ESAF commanders ran their departments like

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[142] The FMLN also mined the roads.

[143] Author's interview at NPS, 22 May 1997, with Major Ed Reeder, National CD Adviser in El Salvador, '88-'89

[144] Per LTC (ret) Bob Watson, 16 June 1997 telephone interview, he and LTC Bacille came up with the idea for a SF LNO in USAID but LTC Bacille sold the concept. Selling the idea probably was not very hard to do, because the use of LNOs was common practice for special operations. LTC Bacille died in El Salvador in 1987 while flying as a passenger in a helicopter that crashed during a rainstorm.

[145] Realizing that effective coordination was very much personality driven, the LNO personified a "casual hero." He shared information and bridged the gap of misperceptions. If the culture of USAID was

"fiefdoms". The ESAF owned and operated the helicopters which provided the quickest (and safest) access to the villages, controlled the roads, provided security, and could generally help, or hinder, most of what USAID was trying to do. The LNO also learned about USAID. He began to better understand and work within the less-hierarchical structure of USAID. Other USAID offices took advantage of having easy access to a MILGP representative and informal coordination crept into the workplace.[146] At the working level, coordination improved.

Faced with the task of training Salvadoran soldiers while they waged war against the guerrillas, the US military planned to send more trainers.[147] Congress wanted to make sure escalation (a la Vietnam) did not occur and restricted the number of trainers to 55 personnel.[148] The number "55" was not open for debate. Though workarounds emerged, such as aircrews and certain temporary personnel not counting towards the 55-man limit, the effort stayed very close to 55 throughout.

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considered "more programmatic", then the SF culture was viewed as being "reckless". Before long, the gap disappeared.

[146] When USAID had parties, the LNO was invited—who in turn brought MILGP friends. The small community of Americans grew closer together and networked.

[147] The term "trainers" was used throughout the war to de-emphasize the influence and involvement the American soldiers had upon the ESAF. In reality, they were "advisers" with all the power and influence that the term implies.

[148] "When in the late 1970s, Congress asked if the present level of trainers in El Salvador was sufficient to meet the training requirements, the terminally stupid response was 'yes'. At the time there were 55 or 56 trainers in country operating under a $12 million program. When Security Assistance rose to $85 million, there was not a soul in Washington willing to revise the number of trainers required to implement the new level of support. As a result, we were stuck on the non-negotiable number 55 and ordered not to ruminate on the subject with the press or anyone else." Colonel John D. Waghelstein, "Ruminations of a Pachyderm or What I Learned in the Counterinsurgency Business," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 5 (Winter 1994), pp. 360-378: 364.

IV. ANALYSIS

Having discussed the US purpose, plan, and programs, it is now possible to test the variables that I believe were needed to improve and attain interagency unity of effort. My analysis of the six independent variables (senior leadership intervention, trust, stakes, shared experiences, resource constraints, and the nature of the conflict) and the dependent variable (unity of effort), is depicted in Figure 2 found at the end of this chapter. I have considered each of the independent variables (with the exception of the nature of the conflict) from three perspectives: the individual, the organization, and the US national level.

I found that most of the variables play differing roles depending upon the stage of the conflict. Stage I, the period of the war prior to the development of a National Campaign Plan of any sort, is pre-1983. Each of the variables in Stage I of the war was present in lesser amounts than in Stage II, except for the constrained resources. It took time for the resources (military personnel, equipment, and financial aid packages) to begin flowing into El Salvador. In three years the numbers of ESAF personnel nearly doubled, more helicopters entered the inventory while the number of fixed-wing aircraft dropped, and the economic and security assistance increased significantly. I consider the resources still more constrained in Stage I than in Stage II because the ESAF personnel required basic military training before they could be employed in the field, people needed to learn how to use and maintain the new equipment, and the aid had to be converted by the bureaucracy into usable forms—goods, services, programs. The bottom line of the analysis of the variables in Stage I is that unity of effort was low

because the war was happening faster than most of the people, plans, programs, and procedures could react.

Stage II of the War started with the writing of the NCP in the Spring of 1983 and continued until 1987, when MEA kicked in and various peace initiatives entered the scene. Building up the ESAF to ensure they became a credible warfighting force that *would not lose* to the FMLN was still the priority during the first half of Stage II. Noticeable improvements across the board resulted in significantly improved unity of effort. With the exception of the "capped" 55 US advisors, more money, personnel, and equipment were available to help fight the war each year. By 1985, the FMLN had to change their tactics from relatively large-scale conventional attacks to smaller-unit actions.

Stage III of the war started in 1987 and continued until the peace accords were signed in 1992. This stage is difficult to evaluate and separate from the effects of change in the international environment. The FMLN took advantage of the rebuilding period after the earthquake and reinvigorated their forces. Early in 1987, the guerrillas came on strong and seized the initiative, but the ESAF were able to inflict fairly large numbers of casualties upon the guerrillas. Economic sabotage continued[149] and as the FMLN saw themselves unable to negate US economic assistance, they resorted to kidnappings, bombings, assassinations. The FMLN resigned themselves to fighting a

[149] Maxwell G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, preface by Ambassador Edwin G. Corr (Washington, D.C., National Defense University Press, 1988), 358. In an effort to ruin El Salvador's economy and bankrupt the war effort, a captured FMLN document emphasized the need to "work systematically in the following areas: a. Fuel (pipelines), b. Electricity, c. Railroads, d. telephone communications (lines and microwave), and e. Cotton and coffee."

prolonged war. As the FMLN's tactics got dirtier, the ESAF sought the moral high ground. The war stagnated.

A. SENIOR LEADERSHIP INTERVENTION

During Stage II, the senior leadership weighed in to provide more guidance at the Country Team level. The war moved from the crises phase to a consolidation phase. No longer was it a matter of losing to the FMLN, so attention began to shift towards the methodical application of the NCP. Debates continued about what would constitute winning if the emphasis did not belong on killing all the guerrillas. Ambassador Edwin Corr arrived in 1985 and began preaching human rights, the consolidation of democracy, the search for peace, the economy, and El Salvador's role in Central America. His personality clicked with Colonels Steele and Ellerson and they all increasingly emphasized the bigger picture. Corr, an ex-Marine, was renown for his constant support and respected for his critical thinking.

General Paul Gorman, USCINCSO, was touted as being the brains behind the counterinsurgency effort and cited for his "aggressive patrolling."[150] General John Galvin credited his predecessor for turning the war around saying, "By the time I took over as CINC USSOUTHCOM, the war had been turned around with a lot of help and guidance, in my opinion, from Paul Gorman. But it wasn't just Paul. Ambassador Pickering was a very astute individual, and he was followed by Ed Corr, an equally good, if not better ambassador."[151] Ellerson's marching orders from the CINC

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[150] 16 June 1997 telephone interview with LTC (ret) Bob Watson.

[151] Max G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, preface by Ambassador Corr (Wahington, D.C., National Defense University Press, 1988), 256.

amounted to an extended "kissss [sic]." "It was—keep it small, keep it simple, keep it sustainable, keep it Salvadoran."[152]

The most senior leaders in Washington also became involved during Stage II. In December, 1983, Vice President Bush visited El Salvador and threatened to end aid unless death squad activities were curbed and certain officers strongly suspected of human rights violations were relieved. The Kissinger Commission Report came out in 1984 right after President Reagan presented the strategy of the "4-D's".

The senior leadership remained proactive and supportive throughout the latter stage of the war. They decided to assign an SF officer every six months to be the military liaison to USAID. This started in the summer of 1987. General Woerner became the CINC saying, "There is still too much of the military effort, not exclusively, but still too much. Until there is a better balance between the military and the other elements of national power, they will not achieve the internal consolidation necessary to declare peace and make peace prevail."[153] The dirty war being waged by the FMLN combined with alleged ESAF human rights abuses resulted in tough warnings from Secretary of State, George Shultz in 1988, and Vice President Dan Quayle in 1989.

B. TRUST

Individuals began trusting each other during Stage II of the war. The same few characters worked, lived, and socialized together. As USAID's Debbie Kennedy noted: "During the late 80's, most people down there were single and they would see each other socially."[154] Soon, bonds started to form. The images of "cookie pushers" versus

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[152] Ibid, 472.
[153] Ibid, 455.
[154] Author's telephone interview with Debbie Kennedy, USAID, 30 May 1997.

the "snake eaters" no longer seemed to apply in El Salvador. That must have been the case someplace else. Ad hoc liaisons began to emerge within each organization. In any case, people certainly became better acquainted with more of the individuals assigned to other agencies. A cataclysmic event occurred on 10 October, 1986, that forced people to depend on others whom they may not have associated with otherwise. A devastating earthquake killed 1000 people in San Salvador and disrupted business-as-usual. "In seven seconds the earthquake did more damage than seven years of insurgent violence," wrote Max Manwaring.[155] Ellerson surmised: "As a result, there was fairly strong cohesion within the government at that time, just as (one) would expect in the wake of that tragedy."[156]

At the organizational level, the inherent distrust started to subside. While USAID still felt the need to keep the military at arms distance in order to not jeopardize their congressional money pot, the historical distrust caused by Vietnam became increasingly moot. The earthquake also had a profound effect upon the levels of organizational trust. Watson said: "Interagency dealings got enormously good because of the earthquake; because the MILGP spent every waking hour with USAID. An emergency operations center was set up in Ambassador Corr's home and was manned 24 hours-a-day."[157] The NCP also depended upon interagency dealings. USAID had to depend upon the military to deliver their food, humanitarian aid, and implement their programs throughout the countryside. Each organization began to appreciate what the

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[155] Manwaring, 341.
[156] A observation made by Colonel John Ellerson, the MILGP Commander in Manwaring's book: *El Salvador at War,* 346.
[157] Author's telephone interview with LTC (ret) Bob Watson, 16 June 1997.

other could contribute to the overall effort, and they all began to expect mutual support. The two organizations seemed to follow the dictum of "trust, but verify."[158]

Maintaining trust at the national level in Washington was a priority for both organizations, but perhaps more so for USAID. USAID's continued congressional support depended upon receiving high marks from the auditors. Without money, USAID was impotent. Overall, trust improved and the congressional allocations increased. In response to the huge amount of misinformation that dominated the press, the embassy sent out widely circulated daily reports so the national leadership could read the unadulterated story. Much time was devoted towards bolstering national trust in hopes of preserving national will. The FMLN also knew the importance of US national will to the prolonged counterinsurgency effort. According to a classified report about PSYOP in El Salvador, the FMLN waged a sophisticated PSYOP campaign of their own inside the Washington beltway:

> The FMLN's PSYOP-related activities were highly effective, precisely because insurgent strategists—especially after the failed rebel offensive of 1981—did not draw arbitrary lines between political and military endeavors. Likewise, the FMLN categorized the activities of . . . USAID and all the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) as "political work", counterinsurgency, or psychological warfare—labels that horrified officials of those agencies.[159]

Despite the efforts of USAID and the MILGP, national trust was deliberately attacked and undermined by the FMLN.

During Stage III, the LNO made a difference, raising "worker bee" trust to its highest level of the entire war. It was during this period that the loaded terms (i.e.,

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[158] The concept of "trust, but verify" belongs to ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

counterinsurgency, PSYOP, and Special Forces) lost their mystique and negative connotations. Working together each day for 6 months created bonds of friendship and trust that continue still to this day. USAID and MILGP representatives planned together for the war's end. Said Major General Mark Hamilton, "Peace was a subject matter conducive to mutual discourse."[160]

C. STAKES

Individual stakes went up in conjunction with the increased emphasis from senior leaders. The Ambassador was vigorously pressing interagency coordination and the FMLN began to change to small-scale tactics and economic sabotage. USAID workers came to the OPATTs and asked for their help in securing infrastructure projects from guerrilla saboteurs. The military civic action program depended upon USAID foodstuffs to draw the crowds. Nobody wanted their part of the interdependent NCP to be the weak link that lost the war. USAID depended upon the military for security information and protection. As the FMLN turned to antipersonnel mines, bombings, kidnappings, and other "random" acts of violence, the stakes were raised for everyone in El Salvador.

The US had stated its purpose and formulated a plan. Each organization knew its reputation, and status hinged on the professional integration of their respective programs. Their successes would do much to heal the wounds left by their parent institutions in Vietnam. If they failed to "draw the line" in El Salvador and prevent the

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[159] SECRET NOFORN Document, S272479, *A History of Psychological Operations in El Salvador: lessons Learned and Prospects for the Future (U)*, 2.

spread of communism, the war would escalate and others would enter the fray. Each organization knew the best chances for success would result from keeping the operation small. The MILGP wanted to stay with the SF approach and the El Salvador mission controlled a growing pot of money, second only to the USAID program in Egypt.

The US national stakes were raised as the counterinsurgency effort took on the task of nation building. The 1984 Kissinger Commission report "educated Americans about the stakes in Central America and helped regularize subsequent congressional funding of the Salvadoran war effort," wrote Bacevich.[161] In Stage II of the war, the US shifted its objectives to creating a democracy, respect for human rights, and the possible returns to US enterprises by building better institutions in El Salvador.

As the war became unwinnable for the FMLN during Stage III, the stakes lessened. Peace seemed inevitable—it was only a question of when. The Salvadoran people grew tired of the war and just wanted it to end. Democracy had grabbed a foothold; the FMLN showed signs of desperation; the Berlin wall came down; and the Soviet Union abandoned its surrogates. Communism was a defeated ideology. The stakes became different shades of democracy, the extent to which institutions could be reformed, and how far the US should go to enforce human rights. In Washington, what happened in El Salvador was of little consequence in light of the dramatic changes across the globe. The US had won the Cold War.

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[160] MG Mark Hamilton, MILGP Commander, Sep '90-Sep '92, during 13 June 1997 telephone interview with author.

[161] A.J. Bacevich, et al, *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador* (Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Washington, D.C., 1988), 22.

D. SHARED EXPERIENCES

The NCP demanded more "shared" experiences on the ground. The OPATTs worked with the USAID infrastructure development officers to win the "hearts and minds" as prescribed by the NCP. The "go-to-guys" learned who to call when the answers to villagers' questions fell beyond their expertise. More money in USAID meant more workers to control and track its distribution. Interagency "hooks" emerged where they had not previously existed.[162] In instituting a plan that was very much personality-driven, interagency "hooks" proved to be very useful. Representatives from each organization worked together to sponsor the civic action programs, ensure fair and unhindered national elections, and began to realize that they each contributed to a larger strategy. The earthquake was an experience shared by all. Workplaces were destroyed, people were injured, unaccounted for, and suddenly people found themselves working side-by-side.

Both organizations had seen significant progress since the *Operación Bienestar* campaign started in San Vicente. In the Embassy's "100 day" report, progress was recorded: "One hundred days after its launching, the Salvadoran National Campaign Plan for the Department of San Vicente has achieved or exceeded substantially all of its objectives. Attention is increasingly being focused on Usulután where the approach to date has been less systematic and less successful."[163] Stage II was a period of momentum for both organizations. The military road the waves of success with Operation Phoenix which was designed to deny the guerrillas the high ground by driving

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[162] In a 16 June 1997 telephone interview, LTC (ret) Bob Watson stated that bit of fate that made a big difference for him was that Greg Huber who ran the USAID Private Enterprise portion was his classmate from the Georgetown class of '68.

them from strongholds on the Guazapa Volcano. Human rights became a real concern to the ESAF—which had become more proficient and self-sufficient.

The US government was keenly interested in the Salvadoran conflict. A lot of aid was being pumped into a very small country and everybody demanded to know how it was being spent. The FMLN lobby stirred up national debates, war refugees poured into the US, and the press brought to light "all of the warts" (real, or perceived). Congressmen and congressional staffers, Human Rights activists, Ambassadors, Presidential Envoys, and others made the Salvadoran experiences—s*hared.*

Both organizations had forged fairly good interagency working relationships by the latter stage of the war. The NCP required interagency dealings; the senior leadership reinforced the need for such projects; and both organizations better understood the contributions of the other. With an eye towards preparing El Salvador to carry on in a post-war environment, the same people turned to new challenges. The Country Team meetings that took place six times-a-week during the war became fewer and less regular. The organizations worked together well—but no longer, extensively. The military once again began to be kept at arms length as civilians debated how to demobilize combatants and assimilate them into a democratic society.

E. RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

From day one, anybody who performed duties in El Salvador knew they were necessarily restrained. The 55-man cap meant each person would have to be wear many different hats. Those who remembered Vietnam knew that if it were not for the US personnel limits, many Americans would be inclined to take charge of any situation that

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[163] US Embassy State Department Message 042142Z, October 4, 1983.

tripped up the ESAF, then try to run the war for themselves. The small US contingent could not take over; they were relegated to the sidelines. Everybody became a human rights activist. The different colors of money meant USAID and USMILGP officers had to be creative, liberal, or even deceptive if they wanted to get their missions done in a timely manner. An OPATT adviser would have to be an expert scrounger, remembering to pick up a fan belt for his truck during a trip to town for a meeting, or swapping a uniform item for some help down the line. A CD coordinator might have money for guns, but no money for replacement parts. There was no staff to "make things happen". It was up to that lone adviser to survive by his wits. One phone, one radio, one road; one of anything was usually considered as being ahead of the game. The helicopters, which turned out to be the best way of getting around the country, belonged to the ESAF. Realizing that there were limits on equipment, money, and personnel, meant that everyone soon learned to accept workarounds—or else, did without.

Considered as a whole, the organizations were less constrained than the individuals themselves. The MILGP could get lots of support, equipment, and money, and satellite imagery that showed enemy activity, but then the ESAF had to be convinced to use it against the FMLN. The standing restraint was that it was to be a Salvadoran effort. USAID was forced to work with, and through, corrupt Salvadoran institutions. USAID and the US military had to take the heat when their Salvadoran counterparts got out of hand. Many concessions had to made in the interest of achieving larger goals. USAID understood that Congress would withhold aid as necessary to encourage Salvadoran reforms. The on-again, off-again aid pipeline hindered USAID's programs that depended so heavily upon the regularity of programmed funds.

Keeping the effort Salvadoran, thus preventing the US from being drawn into a "Vietnam-like" quagmire, was the rationale behind the US policy makers not simply signing a blank check on the US treasury. Instead, over a $1.5 billion was spent during Stage II of the war. The US national resources, other than military personnel in-country, were only limited by national will. If more money or equipment would have ensured defeat of the FMLN, it would have been so allocated. The problem was that more money and equipment was not the answer. Success in El Salvador would require, time, patience, and perseverance—precious commodities for Americans. During Stage II, the US started talking about long-range strategies and seemed to be getting settled in for the long haul.

As the war quieted down, many of the familiar bureaucratic resource constraints resurfaced. The military aid dried up and USAID money still could not be used to fund military projects. An important question which pertained to the large Salvadoran military that was to be retrained and assimilated into the civilian sector was, "When is a military person no longer military?"[164] The answer turned out to be: "When they enter the transition program," but the requirement to distinguish between ex-FMLN versus ex-soldiers proved troublesome.

F. NATURE OF THE CONFLICT

The National Campaign Plan formalized the requirement for initiatives much broader than military action. It became obvious that it would not be enough to just build an ESAF capability to go out and kill guerrillas. The effort began to take on the

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[164] MG Mark Hamilton, MILGP Commander, Sep '90-Sep '92, during 13 June 1997 telephone interview. "USAID at the highest levels had a real anti-military bend. The rules were written to specifically support

appearance of nation building. The ESAF had developed the capability to hold their own militarily, developed plans for sustained operations, and adjusted their efforts to counter the FMLN's deliberate war on the economy.[165] In 1985, the FMLN changed tactics from large conventional attacks to small-scale operations. Economic sabotage increased—and the Country Team realized it was time to switch towards an interagency approach. The changing nature of the war demanded (and allowed for) a broader interagency approach to the war.[166]

A senior MILGP officer commented: "While in El Sal [sic], I became impressed by the desire of the younger USAID and USMILGP folks to *win the war*. If we really did win, I'm convinced it was a direct result of their work and willingness to *make things happen*, in spite of faulty programs and interagency coordination in Washington."

Stage III saw the war change its complexion. The FMLN's tactics were "talk, talk—fight, fight," while continuing their efforts to bleed the country dry by attacking the economic infrastructure. The MEA plan continued to encourage the growth of grass roots government. The war became more political than ever before. ESAF soldiers felt betrayed as concessions were made to the FMLN in the name of peace.

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non-soldiers. I agree with the intent of the regulation, but..." (Author's note: The result translated into a transition program that favored the ex-guerrillas over the ex-soldiers).

[165] Col John D. Waghelstein emphasized the importance of getting the diagnosis right before prescribing the treatment in his article, "Ruminations of a Pachyderm or What I Learned in the Counterinsurgency Business," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 5 (Winter 1994) pp. 360-378: 369. He noted: "...(I)t became obvious that the guerrilla campaign was not targeted against the ESAF and its installations but against the economy and specifically against the two departments."

[166] MG Mark Hamilton made the point in a 13 June 1997 telephone interview that the biggest hindrance to interagency unity of effort was in not "knowing when it was time to switch" (from a military dominant approach to a broader strategy).

G. DEPENDENT VARIABLE: INTERAGENCY UNITY OF EFFORT

Unity of effort was not perfect by the end of the war, but it was obviously much improved. Without a relatively high level of unity, the MILGP and USAID would not have been able to systematically win over 70 percent of the Salvadoran "hearts and minds" as illustrated by the 1990 Gallup opinion poll. An argument can be made that the FMLN became their own worst enemy by waging a brutal and dirty war towards the end, but their actions can be attributed to big losses in the political, military, economic, and social arenas. USAID and the MILGP worked together to undermine the FMLN platform in each of these areas by executing their respective portions of the NCP. A budding democracy offered the people an opportunity make changes through nonviolent means; defense reforms paid off as the ESAF became a more professional and capable institution, and the economic infrastructure improved the quality of life of simple villagers. Unity of effort improved despite the overwhelming hindrances—how?

It seems that unity of effort could not have improved had it not been for better interagency coordination and mutual support, but it is not clear that more of each would have necessarily led to more unity of effort. The different programs required by the NCP could not be have been implemented by either agency alone. Whenever USAID personnel ventured out from the capital to rebuild infrastructure, distribute food, or encourage local governments, they learned the prudence of coordinating their activities with the MILGP. The Ambassadors and MILGP Commanders encouraged interagency coordination. MILGP and USAID efforts combined to produce a synergistic effect. The military benefited by sharing the humanitarian limelight with USAID; and USAID benefited from the MILGP's knowledge of the threat, ties to the ESAF fiefdoms

throughout the country, as well as their mobility and logistics capabilities. USAID had money to spend on infrastructure development; the MILGP helped protect those investments. They trained and established CD units, improved the security perimeters of important infrastructure sites, and worked with the ESAF to enhance USAID's efforts in the countryside. One of the most difficult tasks was to provide security for the light poles. Realizing this, USAID contracted a repair team that developed an awesome capability to fly replacement power poles out to wherever the guerrillas blew up or chopped down power poles. Hence, the insurgents were rarely able to deny electrical power for more than a couple of hours on any given day. Keeping the lights on had a therapeutic effect and increased the efficiency of all kinds of civilian and military operations.

Later, as the two organizations worked to prepare for peace, civil-military tensions reemerged. The MILGP and USAID still worked together, but their goals began to clash. Most of the problems centered around the issue of how to reintegrate the combatants into the civilian sector. In the end, USAID favored the former guerrillas at the expense of the ex-soldiers.

H. SUMMARY

In conclusion, four of the six independent variables I tested significantly affected the degree to which interagency unity of effort occurred: senior leadership involvement, trust, shared experiences, and the nature of the conflict. The remaining two independent variables make sense intuitively, but further analysis shows weak causal links. Higher stakes did not noticeably affect interagency coordination, and lower resource constraints did not influence mutual interagency support.

	Stage I (Pre-1983)	Stage II (1983-1987)	Stage III (1987-1992)	Best during…
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES				
Senior Leadership				
Country Team	L	H	H	Stage II or III
*CINC**	L	M	M+	Stage III
National	M	H	H	Stage II or III
Trust				
*Individuals**	L	M	H	Stage III
Organizational	L	M	M	Stage II or III
National	L	M	M	Stage II or III
Stakes				
*Individual**	M	H	M	Stage II
*Organizational**	M	H	M	Stage II
*National**	M	H	M	Stage II
Shared Experiences				
Individual	L	H	H	Stage II or III
*Organizational**	L	M	H	Stage III
National	M	H	H	Stage II or III
Resource Constraints				
Personal	M	M	M	Stage I, II or III
*Organizational**	M	L	M	Stage I or III
*National**	M	L	M	Stage I or III
Nature of Conflict*	L (Disarray)	H (Insurgent Ascendance)	H (Talk, Talk, Fight, Fight)	Stage II or III
DEPENDENT VARIABLE				
UNITY OF EFFORT	L	M	M+	Stage III

Figure 2. Analysis of Variables

V. RESULTS

At the start, the Salvadoran conflict presented itself as a kind of learning-laboratory for low-intensity conflict—a chance to practice counterinsurgency doctrine. The complex FID problem in El Salvador called for a coherent, timely, and cooperative multi-agency response from the United States. Preventing the spread of communism entailed the artful blending of all the instruments of US and Salvadoran power, cooperation between various inherently adversarial bureaucracies, and synergistic civil-military relationships. Outwardly, the FMLN constituted a serious external threat to the legitimate Salvadoran regime and US advisers, but there were other internal pressures to consider within the combined US-Salvadoran governmental response. First, counterinsurgency doctrine required political, economic, social, and military reforms—collaborative initiatives which exceeded the boundaries of any one agency. Second, organizational theory warned of the difficulty in attaining recurrent cross-agency cooperation. And third, civil-military differences posed peculiar hazards for interagency dealings. In El Salvador the mission was to combat insurgents, but the principles and many of the tasks required to succeed then and there, apply today and elsewhere in waging the wars against drugs, terror, anarchy, and other worrisome problems. The required counter-mechanism for these problems has been termed the interagency process.[167] Lessons emerged from the interagency operations in El Salvador that surely

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[167] The literature is scant on the interagency process but former US Atlantic Command Commander-in Chief Admiral Paul David Miller first described the concept in his book, *The Interagency Process*, National Security paper 11 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1993). Joint Pub 3-08, Volumes I and II, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (Washington D.C., 9 October 1996) outlines the Interagency Process and participants and explains the evolving role of the US military within the Interagency Process. Joint Pub 3-08 reaffirms the importance of interagency coordination and unity of effort but leaves room for this thesis to focus the people tasked with such

apply to the most predominant form of conflict that the US will encounter more and more each day.

The overarching question posed at the start of this study was: What were the reasons US interagency coordination and unity of effort improved in El Salvador during the war, and can they be generalized and applied to contemporary interagency operations? Three hypotheses were tested in Chapter IV in an attempt to isolate some key variables that can be considered, developed, and applied to other interagency efforts. Moreover, in the interest of avoiding interagency disunity of effort, limiting the numbers of personnel involved on the ground in El Salvador turned out to be a good thing. To reiterate Colonel Waghelstein's finding: *smaller is better.*

A. HYPOTHESIS #1

Clear guidance, persistent emphasis, and continual support from key senior leaders are necessary prerequisites for achieving extended interagency unity of effort.

This hypothesis proved to be true in the case of El Salvador. In spite of some spectacular feats by a group of very talented, well-intentioned, special operators and USAID field agents, interagency unity of effort was dismal until after a deliberate effort was made by the senior leadership to articulate a purpose, plan, and programs required to counter the insurgents' gains.[168] Politics sometimes force decision makers to settle for sub-optimal solutions and that seems to have been the case during the first few years of the war. The situation was so strange, and the government that we supported was so

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operations on those variables which seem to be most instrumental in achieving the vital links required to succeed.

[168] This early period of the war is chronicled as a period of disarray, but I want to go on record as appreciating the fact that the war was not lost in the FMLN's 1981 "Final Offensive" and it is a lot easier

bad, that for awhile, it seemed like the insurgents might win. The Salvadoran government and the ESAF made so many mistakes that many of the trainers and advisers in El Salvador today admit that if they had been Salvadorans, they would have sided with the guerrillas.[169]

Guidance and support did finally come down in the Woerner Report. Next came the first cut at a broad-based NCP with *Operación Bienestar*. When it became clear that the NCP could produce desired results, but the bureaucratic mechanism was bad, UPR was the answer. UPR did many of the same good things, plus more psychological operations, but since it was run by the military (with all of the civil-military stigmas that a military-run program was bound to have in El Salvador) it was rejected by Duarte's government. Finally, a solution was found in the MEA program. The idea behind the MEA program was to encourage democratic government and provide opportunities and growth at the local village-level. Each village held open town meetings. The people nominated and voted for the infrastructure development projects that they wanted in their own village and USAID's money went straight to the mayor. The mayor hired local people to do the work and the townspeople oversaw the progress of each project. As a result, people began to feel like they could make a difference in the quality of their lives and felt vested in their homeland. MEA was a winner and it continues in El Salvador today.

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to speculate about should have—or could have—been done, given the benefit of hindsight and an unavoidably over-simplistic view of the problem.

[169] The ESAF abused the people that could either support them—or turn against them and join the insurgents. They did not learn until very late how valuable would become the moral high ground. In the end, they lost the very institution (and way of life) they had tried so hard to preserve.

The senior leaders did not develop the program; it was bottom-fed from USAID and MILGP workers in the field. Then the leaders did the right thing. They said—this works; it is producing the results we need—this is the way we are going! But had the leadership not thrown their support behind other programs that subsequently fizzled? Yes they had, but the point is that they kept pointing the Country Team in the *next* best direction until they (and the Salvadorans) found something that worked. Colonel John Waghelstein, eleven years after he served as the USMILGP Commander in El Salvador, offered a different perspective about America's role in the counterinsurgency effort:

> I believe that Washington's greatest contribution to the Latin American counter-insurgency era was not the brilliant tactical and operational training and advice provided during that era, nor was it the millions in military hardware. The case could be made that while training, advisory and material assistance programmes were important, they were really the entrée that gave the opportunity to ask the right questions that, in turn, helped the clients to select the correct responses. In short, get the diagnosis done right first, then look for treatment options.[170]

B. HYPOTHESIS #2

Trust, stakes, and shared experiences are important determinants of effective interagency coordination.

This hypothesis proved to be mostly true. Trust emerged as the most critical determinant of interagency coordination and shared experiences tended to build trust. The stakes, however, did not seem to clearly lead to better interagency coordination. The stakes had to be high enough to keep people interested, but then they seemed to reach a point of diminishing returns. Coordination got better as the stakes were raised, but it did not worsen when the stakes dropped. Improvements in cross-agency

coordination were necessary for stronger unity, and coordination needed trust and shared experiences. Most of the time it was not a matter of selfishness or stubbornness on the part of one individual that ultimately encumbered coordination, rather it was a matter of understanding why coordinating with the other made more sense than following the normal routine. People needed to realize how they each contributed to the larger effort. After coordination produced some better results, the tendency was to make the extra effort, next time. After a while, extra effort could be drawn out because each individual knew and trusted the other, and empathized with the other's predicament. Helping someone outside the organization in such an obviously interrelated environment was like investing in insurance—you hope you will never need it, but you are sure glad it is there, if you do.

Individual trust became progressively better as the war wore on. Organizational and national-level trust improved, but never reached a prominently high level. Trust above the level of individuals appeared superficial and more skeptical. "Trust, but verify" remained the rule. This meant constant USAID audits and figurative finger-pointing at the higher levels. The further from "the action" representatives of each organization found themselves, the higher their tendency for distrust. High-level distrust translated into laborious policies that then rippled down through the organizations and made coordination on the ground more difficult.

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[170] John D. Waghelstein, "Ruminations of a Pachyderm or What I Learned in the Counterinsurgency Business," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* ,Vol. 5 (Winter 1994), pp. 360-378: 368.

C. HYPOTHESIS #3

The resource constraints and irregular nature of the conflict required mutual interagency support in order to achieve unity of purpose.

This third hypothesis also turned out to be partially true. Constrained resources, like stakes, may have contributed to better mutual interagency support, but it is not clear that resource constraints were a direct causal link. When resources were less constrained during the middle of the war, mutual support still increased, as did unity of effort. Then, when resources became more constrained towards the end of the war, mutual interagency support stayed at the same "improved" level. The nature of the conflict demanded interagency mutual support. The all-inclusive NCP could not be accomplished by either organization alone. The MILGP needed USAID's money, humanitarian and civilian inroads to the populace, and global appeal. USAID needed the MILGP's access to the countryside, its logistics capabilities, and the cloak of security it could provide. Even if USAID had had its own fleet of helicopters and security forces, the ESAF ran the country outside San Salvador, and those were the areas USAID needed access to. Without the MILGP, USAID would have faced resistance from the FMLN—and the ESAF.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

If nothing changes, and the US continues to conduct ad hoc business as usual, the military will predictably be called upon to respond and restore order only to be frustrated by ineffectual organizations and bureaucratic infighting on the homefront. Realizing this now, the military should take the lead in organizing and preparing for interagency operations. Throughout the course of this interagency study, certain themes

came to light. The ideas listed below should be considered preventative advice, policy recommendations, or in some cases—imperatives. Like everything in El Salvador, they are easier to say than they are to do.

1. Conduct Interagency Exercises

Operations in El Salvador, Panama, Haiti, and Somalia (to name only a recent few); all were interagency efforts. It is not enough to practice joint operations; interagency scenarios are more probable. Interagency exercises allow more realism by exploring civilian (as well as military) courses of action, and provide the shared experiences that develop trust and better understanding. Senior leaders and hands-on operators could thus be exposed to the kinds of problems they are most likely to face.

It would be unfair to suggest that interagency exercises are not taking place—they are, but not to the extent that I believe is necessary. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) recently incorporated interagency participants into Exercise BLUE ADVANCE (a disaster relief scenario), *Fuerzas Evacuación* (a noncombatant evacuation scenario), and *Fuerzas Unidas* (a counter-drug scenario). Steps are being taken (and they seem to be going in the right direction), but we need more elsewhere, and in deliberate ways. As David Mitchell, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy matters explained: "There is no central clearing house for interagency training."[171] There are interagency conferences being sponsored by USAID that focus on post-conflict operations, some that address humanitarian operations, and others that

[171] Civilian David Miller is the Assistant for Civil Affairs Policy in the Pentagon. He added: "Most (interagency) exercises are decentralized, and the planners invite those that they feel they want. Often, though, the interagency representatives are . . . token—e.g. one person to represent the NGO community. Also, the people that participate in exercises are not necessarily those that would participate in a later operation."

deal with police agencies involved in peace operations. But so far there has been no initiative to exercise hypothetical country teams in the back woods of North Carolina, Louisiana, or Northwest Florida where special operators train for their real-world missions. The Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) has the resources to conduct interagency exercises at least at the tactical, village level. There are several other civic action/MOOTW exercise scenarios that could easily be expanded to incorporate non-military players. It is just a matter of deciding it is the prudent thing to do, and I think it is.

2. Invest in People

Do not just say it—do it! The greatest weapon a special operator wields is his, or her, brain. Learning to think about difficult problems takes education, training, and practice. Regional expertise is more than being able to speak a language. Cross-cultural communications come from practice. Our people have to get to know the people they might be required to advise, persuade, train, or fight with (in every corner of the globe), including at home. The people involved in interagency efforts must get to know the people in the other agencies, develop trust, and make deals that outweigh the larger hindrances. The "hooks" need to be placed where they can do our nation, and our allies, the most good. We need to go beyond the areas where vital interests are at stake and develop relationships wherever we can. The world is smaller now then ever before and boundaries are fading. This is the skill required of modern "warrior-diplomats"[172] who make up the special operations forces. It is invaluable. It is a bargain, but it is not cheap.

3. Educate the Leaders

Ambassadors, commanders, directors, or policy makers: every one of these senior leaders can make a big difference in how the US government conveys, translates, or implements policy. They need to appreciate (not just pay lip service to) how civilian and military agencies will act upon their guidance. Today, fewer civilian leaders have military experience so they may be more apt to view the military (especially special operators) as reckless, trigger-happy, or otherwise incapable of handling matters that require diplomacy and tact. Deliberate efforts must be made to educate, demonstrate, and otherwise acquaint these key senior leaders to the military in order to develop trust. Cultivating trust at all levels is bound to improve interagency operations and therefore bolsters US national interests.

4. Develop Interagency Organizations

This is perhaps the easiest to say, hardest to do, and least likely to happen anytime soon. That said, interagency structures and procedures are imperatives. The "joint" train has already left the station. It will take years before the military begins to practice what it has preached, and now recorded, as joint doctrine. Joint Pub 1 says: "When the United States undertakes military operations, the U.S. Armed Forces are only one component of a national-level effort involving the various instruments of national power: economic, diplomatic, informational, and military. Instilling unity of effort at the national level is necessarily a cooperative endeavor involving a variety of

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[172] Ambassador H. Allen Holmes, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Low Intensity Conflict characterizes SOF as "warrior diplomats."

Federal departments and agencies."[173] True jointness has yet to arrive and begin to re-color unified organizations and operations. Good—because "purple" is no longer the color in vogue. Joint operations are simple in comparison to the many possible disparate interagency combinations that are involved in all manner of contemporary civil-military operations. Civilians and the military will have to work side-by-side, more and more, in order to accomplish US national objectives. Turf delineation will become (has become) less certain. The equation is further complicated when the context is global and other countries act in accordance with their own versions of suitable civil-military relations. Until the concept of optimizing has been redefined to include postwar reconciliation concerns earlier in the process, it is safe to say that interagency operations will continue to be sub-optimized by dated beliefs about democratic civil-military relations. Maybe "gold" is the new color for the paradigm which communicates the modern, interagency approach to complex problems. Interagency operations are here to stay and the organizations need to support them. If the Country Team can make it happen at the host country level, then there needs to be empowered Country Team-type organizations at the regional and national levels. The empowerment of interagency entities—the "crabgrass" of bureaucracy—is essential for implementing national solutions to complicated problems. Without institutionalizing interagency emphasis, too much unity of effort will be sacrificed until the workarounds get in place. But if change is bad for organizations, then change is really bad for US bureaucracies. Organizations need to change if they are to support interagency operations that, in many cases, are extremely time-critical: counter-terrorism (CT)

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[173] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 1, *Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces* (Washington, D.C.,

responses, for example. Today CT responses are the result of a convoluted ad hoc process in which success relies upon innate human reactions, given their appreciation of the urgency of terrorist crises, to squelch interagency squabbles and get the job done fast. Ad hoc processes. . . is that what we really want, or rather what we have settled for instead of making hard decisions and real changes?

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